

THERON and ASPASIO:

R. A. DODSON. 1807*

S E R I E S

OF

1474. aa. 7.

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS,

UPON THE

Most *Important* and *Interesting* SUBJECTS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By JAMES HERVEY, A.M.

Late Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

*My Mouth shall daily speak of thy Righteousness and Salvation;
for I know no End thereof.* Psal. lxxi. 13.

VOL. II.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed by Charles Rivington,

For JOHN and FRANCIS RIVINGTON, at the *Bible*
and *Crown*, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*.

M DCC LXVII.

W. DODGE

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A
S E R I E S
O F
D I A L O G U E S.

D I A L O G U E IX.

THERON, impressed with the last Conversation, was very desirous to resume the Subject, and renew the important Debate. With this View, He conducted his Friend into a Retirement, commodious for the Purpose.

They enter a spacious *Lawn*; which lay opposite to the House, and opened itself in the Form of an expanded Fan. The Mounds, on either Side, were dressed in Verdure; and ran out in a slanting Direction. The whole, to an Eye placed at a Distance, bore the Resemblance of a magnificent *Vista*; contracting, by slow Degrees, its Dimensions; and lessening, at last, into a Point. Which, the regular

and graceful Seat, with all imaginable Dignity, supplied.

Nature had sunk the Lawn into a gentle *Decline*. On whose ample Sides, were Oxen browsing, and Lambs frisking. The lusty Drovers lowed, as they passed; and the thriving Flocks, bleated welcome Music in their Master's Ear.—Along the Midst of this verdant Slope, was stretched a spacious and extensive *Walk*. Which, coated with Gravel, and fenced with Pallisadoes, looked like a plain Stripe of Brown, intersecting a Carpet of the brightest Green.—At the Bottom, two handsome *Canals*, copiously stocked with Fish, sometimes floated to the Breeze; sometimes stood unmoved “pure as the Expanse of Heaven.” The Waters, beheld from every Room in the House, had a fine Effect upon the Sight; not without a refreshing Influence on the Imagination.—At the Extremity of one, was planted a stately *Colonnade*. The Roof, elevated on Pillars of the *Ionic* Order; the Area slabbed with Stones, neatly ranged in the Diamond-fashion. Several Forest-chairs accommodated the Anglers with a Seat, while the bending Dome supplied them with a Shade.

Corresponding, and on the Margin of the other Canal, was erected a *Summer-house*, of a very singular Kind.—The lower Part had an Opening towards the North; it was cool; it was gloomy; and had never seen the Sun. It carried the romantic Air of a *Grotto*, or rather the pensive Appearance of a *Hermit's Cell*. The Outside was coarse and rugged with protuberant Stones. Partly over-spread with Ivy, partly covered with Moss, it seemed to be the Work of antient Years. You descend, by Steps

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of Turf; and are obliged to stoop as you pass the Door. A scanty Iron Grate, with certain narrow Slits in the Wall, transmit a glimmering Light; just sufficient to discover the inner Structure. Which appears, like one continued Piece of Rock-work; a Cavern cut from the surrounding Quarry.—*Above*, hung an irregular Arch; with an Aspect, that seemed to presage a Fall, and more than seemed to alarm the Stranger. *Below*, lay a Paving of homely Pebbles; in some Places, a little furrowed; as though it had been worn, by the frequent Tread of solitary Feet. *All around*, were Rusticity and Solemnity; Solemnity, never more visibly seen, than through a Gloom.—The Furniture, of the same *grotesque* Fashion, with the Apartment. A Bench hewed, You would suspect, by Nature's Chizzel, out of the solid Stone. A Sort of Couch, composed of swelling Moss, and small fibrous Roots.—From one Corner, trickled a pure Spring: which crept, with a bubbling Moan, along the channeled Floor; till its Current was collected into a Basen, rudely scooped from the Ground. On the Edge of this little Receptacle, lay chained a rusty Bowl; and over it, stood an antique worm-eaten Table.—On the least obscure Part of the Wall, you discern, *dimly* discern, a Parchment Scroll; inscribed with that sage, but mortifying Admonition; VANITY OF VANITIES! ALL IS VANITY!

Over this Recess, so pleasingly horrid, and adapted to solemn Musings, arose an open and airy *Belvedere*. You ascend by winding Stairs; and, coming from the *uncouth* Abode below, are sweetly surprised with an *elegant* Hexagon.—The Cieling lofty, and decorated with the softest, richest, almost flowing

Fret-work. The Wainscot, in large Pannels of Oak, retained its native Auburn: so beautifully plain, that, like an amiable Countenance, it would have been disfigured, rather than improved, by the most costly Paint. On this were disposed, in gilded Frames, and to great Advantage, a Variety of entertaining *Landscapes*. But none surpassed, none equaled, all were a Foil to, the noble lovely Views, which the Windows commanded.—The Chimney-piece, of white shining Marble, streaked with Veins of vivid Red. Over it, was carved a fine Festoon of artificial, in it, was ranged a choice Collection of natural Flowers.—On a Table of glossy Walnut, lay a portable Telescope; attended with *Thomson's Seasons*, and *Vanierii Prædium Rusticum* *.

The Whole was fitted up in the highest Taste, and furnished with every pleasurable Ornament. On purpose to harmonize with that *lavish Gaiety*, which seemed to smile over all the Face of Nature. On purpose to correspond with that *vernal Delight*, which came breathing on the Wings of every fragrant Gale. I may add, on purpose to remind the Beholder of those *immortal Mansions*, which are decorated with Images infinitely more splendid, with Objects unspeakably more glorious. Where holy Beings will spend,

* *Vanierii Prædium Rusticum*—A most elegant *Latin Poem*: which treats of every remarkable Peculiarity, relating to the Business of a Country Life, or the Furniture of a Country Seat.—It entertains us with a Description of the most *agreeable* Objects; in an easy Flow, of the *purest* Language, and most *musical* Numbers.

It is, I think, one continued Beauty. Superior to every Thing of the Kind, I have met with among the Moderns; and scarcely, if at all, unworthy the first Genius of the *Augustan Age*. *Uni Virgilio secundus, & pæne par.*

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spend, not a few vacant Hours in refined Amusement, but a boundless Eternity in the Consummation of Joy.—For, to a well-turned Mind, Nature is a Preceptor; and these are her instructive Lessons. To the pure in Heart, even Sense is edifying; and these are its delicate Moralities.

The redundant Waters of the Canal, rolled off in a spreading *Cascade*. Which, tumbling from many a little Precipice, soothed the Air with a Symphony of soft and gurgling Sounds. Nor ever intermitted the obliging Office,

From Morn to Noon, from Noon to dewy Eve.

But, when the fanning Breezes dropt their Wings; when the feathered Choir were hushed in Sleep; when not so much as a chirping Grasshopper, was heard throughout the Meads; this liquid Instrument still played its *Solo*: still pursued its busy Way, and warbled, as it flowed, melodious Murmurs.

Asp. Such, *Theron*; so uniform, uninterrupted, and invariable, should be our Conformity to the Precepts of the Law.—But alas! those sacred Precepts are so *exceedingly broad*, that the most enlarged human Obedience, is far from being commensurate to their Extent: so *absolutely holy*, that our highest Attainments fall vastly short of their exalted Perfection.—How then can We expect Justification, from such a consummate Rule? How dare We place any Dependence, upon such imperfect Duties?

When You was pleading for such a Method of Justification, You put me in Mind of the Consul *Mummius*. I could not but think of those memorable Orders, which He gave the Merchant, who

undertook to convey his fine *Grecian* Statues to *Rome*.

Ther. Instead of the Consul, You should have said the Clown *Mummius*. No Clown ever discovered a more gross and indelicate Taste, than that illustrious Booby. For any One to talk of making new *Antiques**, was Folly and Nonsense to the last Degree. But is it equally absurd, for Us to talk of regaining and securing the Favour of GOD, by our Repentance, our Reformation, our holy Duties?

Asp.

* *Mummius* was General of the Roman Army; and, on Account of his signal Victories in *Achaia*, surnamed *Achaicus*. Though a successful Warrior, He was no very acute Connoisseur. Of this, the Story to which *Aspasio* refers, is a pretty evident Proof.—Having conquered and plundered the City of *Corinth*, there was found, among the Spoils, a most curious Collection of Pictures and Statues; wrought by the ablest Hands, and greatest Masters, that *Greece* itself had produced. What shall He do with these incomparable Remains of Antiquity? He resolves, forsooth, upon transmitting them to *Rome*; that they may make a *Shew*, on the Day of his Triumph. As Water-carriage was most convenient, He agrees with the Captain of a Vessel; charges Him to take particular Care of the Freight; and adds, very seriously adds; That in Case they were lost in their Passage, He would oblige Him to provide new ones. A Saying, deservedly ridiculed by all Men of Sense, as a most egregious Solecism in Taste and Delicacy.

*Demens! qui Nimbos & non imitabile Fulmen
Ære & cornipedum Cursu simulâret Equorum.*

VIRG.

If this Reprehension of the Poet's, is applicable to *Mummius*, and his ill-judged Menace; how much more justly may it be applied to *Theron*, and his self-justifying Sentiments.

DIALOGUE IX.

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Asp. I see very little odds in the Case, truly. Because, the Means, which You would use, are impracticable; and the End, at which You aim, is unattainable; unless

————— *One greater Man*
Restore Us, and regain the blissful Seat.

Milton, You observe, had no Notion of Man's restoring Himself; or *regaining* the Favour of GOD, by his own Reformation. Such an Attempt, according to his Way of thinking, were somewhat like the Conceit of making *new Antiques*.—What Hand could give Us *Jupiter*, in all his commanding Majesty, but the Hand of *Phidias*? What Pencil could shew Us *Venus*, in all her attractive Beauty, but the Pencil of *Apelles*? Much more may We ask; what Obedience could equal the Perfection of the divine Law, but the Obedience of *CHRIST*? Or what Expedient can reconcile Sinners to their offended GOD, but only the Blood and Righteousness of his beloved SON?

Ther. Pray, let me ask in my Turn—Because Mankind are incapable of pleasing their MAKER, by yielding an *absolute* and *invariable* Obedience to the moral Law; does it follow from thence, that they cannot render themselves acceptable to Him, by an universal Course of sincere Obedience?

Asp. I think, it follows from what has been already observed. If You desire new Arguments, they are at hand.

The Law, says the Teacher of the *Gentiles*, is the *Ministration of Death* *. How can this be true, if
it

* 2 Cor. iii. 7. In *this* Place, I apprehend, the Apostle means the *moral* Law, and that principally. As that alone

it requires no more than a *sincere* Obedience; such as is proportioned to our infirm State? If this be sufficient to justify, and intitle Us to our CREATOR's Favour; the Law ceases to be the Ministration of Condemnation. It becomes (which is flatly contradictory to the Apostle's Doctrine) the Ministration of Righteousness.

The Law is stiled, by the same inspired Teacher, *A Schoolmaster* to bring Us to *CHRIST* †. How can it, upon your Supposition, be qualified for such an Office? If a sincere Obedience be the Whole of its Demands, it can no longer direct Us to *CHRIST*; it will no longer deliver Us over to a REDEEMER's Merit; but must engage and attach Us to *itself*. Teaching Us to look upon its Precepts, and our own conscientious Observance of them, as the Tenure of eternal Life.

Do

alone was *written and engraven on Stones*. Elsewhere, I believe, He uses the Word in a larger Sense; and intends to exclude *all* Law whatever, from bearing any Share in our Justification.

† *Gal. iii. 24.* Παιδαγωγός, *A School-master*. Who pretends not to *finish* the Education of Youth; but directs them to, and prepares them for, higher Studies, or nobler Employs. The Law, in like Manner, aims not at furnishing Us with a Title to eternal Happiness; but *disposes* and *disciplines* Us, for the All-sufficient REDEEMER, and his free Salvation.

Some have thought, that *εἰς Χριστόν* signifies, *Until the Coming of CHRIST*. But this will hardly consist with the Genius of the Language, or with the Import of the following Clause, *That We might be justified by Faith*.— Besides, this would confine the Efficacy of the Law, to that Period of Time, which preceded our LORD's Incarnation. Whereas, it *still* does, and *always* will act, (until this Corruptible shall put on Incorruption) in a Way of Subserviency to his Merits.

Do You insist upon a third Proof? A third presents itself. Not so much founded on Argumentation, as deduced from Example.—How was *Abraham* *, the Friend of GOD, and Father of the Faithful, justified? By a Course of sincere, or by many Acts of heroic Obedience? No; but by Faith in the promised MESSIAH. *Abraham worked not*, with a View to obtain Justification; *but believed on Him, who justifieth the Ungodly*.—How was *David* *, the Man after GOD's own Heart, justified? By his Zeal for his CREATOR's Glory, or by his eminent Services to his Fellow-creatures? No; but by a Righteousness imputed: even that Righteousness of the blessed REDEEMER, through which *Iniquity is forgiven, and Sin pardoned*.—And can We be said to walk humbly, or can We be thought to walk surely, if, refusing to tread in the Steps of these exemplary Saints, We divert into a Path of our own devising?

Ther. “Of our own devising!”—No, my Friend: there is a *milder* Law introduced by the Gospel, con-
 descending

** These two Examples are, with the greatest Judgment selected, and with the utmost Propriety applied. *Rom. iv. 1, &c. Rom. iv. 6, &c.*—*Abraham* was the most illustrious Pattern of Piety, among the *Jewish* Patriarchs: *In Glory there was None like Him*, *Eccles. xlv. 19.* *David* was the most zealous and seraphic of the *Jewish* Kings: *A Man after GOD's own Heart*, *1 Sam. xiii. 14.*—If neither of these distinguished Personages, was justified by *his own* Obedience; but each by an *imputed* Righteousness: If they both obtained Acceptance with GOD, not as *upright* Beings, who might claim it; but as *sinful* Creatures, who must implore it; the Consequence is glaring. It is such, as must strike every attentive Understanding; must affect every individual Person; and seclude all Manner of Works, even those of the highest Saint, from any the least Degree of Ingredieney into Justification.

descending and merciful to our Infirmities, which accepts of Sincerity instead of perfect Obedience?

Asp. When was this milder Law introduced, and the stricter abrogated?—Not upon the Entrance of Sin, I presume. At this Rate, the original Law must be the Creature of a *few Days*, perhaps of a *few Hours* only. But can We imagine, that the All-wise and Unchangeable GOD would ordain a System of Precepts, to be disannulled, as soon as enacted? Not in our LORD's Time, I am very certain. That holy Commandment, which requires *supreme* Love to GOD, and *perfect* Charity to Men, He assures Us, was still in Force *. Nay, it is evident, from the Nature of the DEITY, and from our Relation to one another, That it always will be in Force; that it never can cease; but is necessary and everlasting.

“ A milder Law, condescending to our Infirmities”—What can be the Purport of such an Institution? It must be supposed to speak the following Language; “ Be it known unto You, O Children of *Adam*, that You are no longer enjoined to love the LORD with all your Strength, nor to love your Neighbour as Yourselves.—*Once*, indeed, I insisted upon absolute Purity of Heart; *now* I can dispense with some Degree of evil Concupiscence.—Since *CHRIST* is come, and his Gospel preached, You need not always be clothed with Humility; but may feel some little Emotions of Pride.—In short; because You are *weak*, I will *connive*; or even accommodate my Demands to your enfeebled and depraved Condition.”

Not

* Matt. xxii. 37, 38, 39.

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Not to urge (what must be shocking to every Ear) That such a Doctrine would make the HOLY ONE of GOD, a Minister of Sin; and the Gospel of our Salvation, a Patent for Licentiousness. Let me only ask—Does this agree with our LORD's Declaration? *One jot or Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled* *.—Is this suitable to the Perfections of the Divine LEGISLATOR? *With whom is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning* †?—Will this consist with the avowed Resolution of the Almighty JEHOVAH? *He will magnify the Law, and make it honourable* ‡.

Ther. However You may decry, what I call the milder Law, St. Paul asserts it to be the *Christian Scheme*. This he strenuously argues for, as the only Scheme by which any Man can be justified in the Sight of GOD.

Asp. Does He, *Theron*? In what Epistle? What Chapter? What Verse?—He says, addressing Himself to the *Galatian Converts*; *I do not frustrate the Grace of GOD; for, if Righteousness came by the Law, CHRIST is dead in vain* ||. From which Passage, We learn two very momentous Truths. That, were we to derive a justifying Righteousness from the Law, this would not only be *derogatory* to the Honour of Grace, but *subversive* of its very Being.—That by seeking Justification through our own conscientious Behaviour, We make, as far as in Us lies, the Death of *CHRIST* a *vain Thing*; for which there was no Occasion, and of which there is no Use.

To

* Matt. v. 18.
|| Gal. ii. 21.

† Jam. i. 17.

‡ Isai. xlii. 21.

To the same Purpose it is written in that invaluable Epistle to the *Romans* *; *If they which are of the Law be Heirs; if they, who trust to their own Performances of the Law, are thereby intitled to the heavenly Inheritance; Faith is made void, and the Promise made of none Effect.*—See now, my Friend, the Tendency of your Opinion! It is not a mere speculative Mistake; an Error of inconsiderable Consequence; but such as strikes at the Fundamentals of the Gospel. Instead of being the only *Christian* Scheme, it totally overthrows † *Christianity* itself. For, it would render the Promise abortive, and supersede the Necessity of Faith. It would destroy the very Existence of Grace, and make even the Death of *CHRIST* a superfluous Transaction.

Ther. This I see, *Aspasio*; That the Method of obtaining Acceptance on Account of our own Sincerity, is a benign Expedient; such as corresponds with the compassionate Nature of the *DEITY*; and is, what the Apostle styles, *being justified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.*

Asp.

* *Rom.* iv. 14.

† *St. Paul* says of those Preachers, who taught Justification by the Works of the Law, *They would pervert, or (as the Original $\mu\iota\lambda\alpha\sigma\pi\epsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$ may be translated) subvert and overthrow the Gospel of CHRIST.*—To pervert, give a *wrong Turn*, or a *false Colour*, seems not to express fully the Apostle's Idea, nor to preserve the native Energy of his Argument. The Greek Word is equivalent to the Hebrew $\הפך$, which we generally render *evertere*. *Gal.* i. 7.

It may be worth our while, to transcribe *Beza's* Descant upon the Passage: which is no less pertinent, than it is important. *Quid enim magis contrarium est Fidei, sive gratiæ Justificationi, quàm Justificatio ex Lege, sive Meritis, non CHRISTI sed nostris? Itaque que volunt ista duo conciliare, magis etiam sunt inepti, quàm si quis conetur Lucem cum Tenebris, Mortem cum Vitâ conjungere.*

Asp. How! To be justified by Faith, and justified by Sincerity, the *same* Thing!—Is it possible?—Let me illustrate my Query by a Similitude, which our present Situation suggests. Sometimes an easy Comparison is more convincing, than a laboured Argument.

From this pleasing Eminence, We command an extensive View of the Country. Our Eye connects the artless Grandeur of Nature, with the elegant Embellishments of the Summer-house. Nor is the public Road the least entertaining Part of the Scene. Because, it presents Us with a *moving Picture*; with a perpetual Succession of new Objects.—How many Travelers have passed in Review, since We took our Seat in this agreeable Elevation! Just at this Instant, a *Stage-coach* bolts out of the Lane: filled, I suppose, with Passengers, that reside in the Neighbourhood, or are to lodge in the next Market-town. We will suppose them set down at their Journey's End. An Acquaintance visits them: congratulates them on their Arrival: and asks that customary Question, "How they came?"—"We came, say they, without walking a Step ourselves; yet by walking, as far as We were able."—Is this Answer intelligible? Are these Sentiments consistent? So intelligible is my Friend's Doctrine. So consistent is Justification, vouchsafed *without* the Deeds of the Law; and Justification obtained, by performing the Deeds of the Law, *as well* as We are able.

Ther. Without the Law, signifies, Without the Necessity of an exact and unerring Conformity to it.

Asp. This is not *without*, but *by* the Law, qualified in the Rigour of its Demands, and departing some-

somewhat from the Perfection of its Precepts. Could You affirm, with any Propriety, that this Part of the Hemisphere is *without the Sun*? Because, an intervening Cloud has moderated its Fervour, and abated its Glare.

What says the Apostle? His Words in another Place, will determine his Meaning in this. If a State of Acceptance with GOD, be of *Works*; be referable to our own Obedience, whether sincere or perfect: *it is no more of Grace* *; no more the Effect of free Favour, but a Recompence owing to Worth, or a Reward belonging to Worth.—Works and Grace, in Point of Justification, are irreconcilable Opposites †. On this Pinnacle they cannot stand together. One must supplant and overthrow the other.

But why do I speak of Grace? If my Friend's Opinion prevail, Grace is at an end. What We took to be the Gospel, turns out a Covenant of Works. Salvation ceases to be a free Gift, and becomes a necessary Payment. For, *to Him that worketh*, that performeth what the Law requires, *is the Reward not reckoned of Grace*; but He may claim it, as his Due; it must be paid Him, as Matter of Debt ‡.

Ther.

* Rom. xi. 6. The Passage produced by *Aspasio*, refers immediately to the Doctrine of Election, and but remotely to the Privilege of Justification. However, as the former includes the latter, if *that* be perfectly free, *this* cannot be the Consequence of Works. The Argument, therefore, I apprehend, is conclusive, though the Proof is not so direct.

† *E diametro inter se opponuntur, Moses & JESUS CHRISTUS: Lex & Promissio: facere & credere: Opera & Fides: Merces & Donum.* BENDEL.

‡ Rom. iv. 4.

Ther. You take no Notice of what I urged, concerning the *Benignity* of this Scheme; and how much it magnifies the Clemency of the great LEGISLATOR.

Assp. But why should Clemency erect its Throne, on the Ruins of almost every other Attribute?—This Method would dishonour the *Veracity* of GOD; which has denounced a Curse, upon every Deviation from his revealed Will.—It would depreciate the *Administration* of his Justice; which cannot but punish, whatever violates his sacred Precepts.—It would greatly derogate from the *Dignity* of his Law; and make it a mere Thing of Wax. To bend; and truckle; and take its Form, from the Sin and Weakness of human Nature.

Ther. Will the divine Law then make no favourable Allowances for human Infirmities, for constitutional Faults, and Strength of Passion?

Assp. Far be it from me to represent the Law of the MOST HIGH, either more strict, or more yielding, than it really is. To avoid all Possibility of such a Mistake, let Us hear the Declaration of the Law itself. *Cursed is every One that continueth not in all Things, which are written in the Book of the Law to do them* *.

Every One; without any Exception of Persons; without any Regard to Pleas, either of human Weakness, or violent Temptation.—*That continueth not*; it is not enough to observe these holy Commandments, in the general Tenour of our Conversation. Our Course of Obedience must be without any Intermision; from the earliest Dawn of Reason, to the latest

Period of Life.—*In all Things*; We must refrain from all the Sins, that are forbidden, and from every Approach towards them. We must practise all the Virtues, that are enjoined, and in their full Extent of Perfection.

In a Word; the Law insists upon Obedience, perfect in its *Principle*; perfect in all its *Parts*; perfect in every *Degree*; and in each of these Respects *perpetual* *.—The least Deficiency in any one Particular, renders Us liable to Vengeance; and, notwithstanding any Sorrow for Transgressions, notwithstanding all Pretensions to Sincerity of Heart, consigns Us over to the Curse.

Theron paused—He seemed to be struck with Surprise.—But rallying his Thoughts, replied. According to your Interpretation, this is the Language of the Law; Cursed is every One, that is chargeable with the *least* Sin. Nay, cursed is every One, that is not *perfectly* righteous. But if *this* be the Sense of the Passage, Who of all Flesh can be saved?

Asp. Say rather; If the Demands of the divine Law are so wonderfully high; if its Sanction is so awfully rigorous; then must every Mouth be stopped—then is all the World become guilty before GOD—and, *by the Works of the Law shall no Man living be justified.*

Ther.

* That the Law insists upon an Obedience *absolutely perfect*, will be farther evident to the attentive Reader, if He considers the Tenour of St. Paul's Argumentation, in his Epistle to the *Romans*, and to the *Galatians*. Particularly *Rom.* iii. 23. iv. 15. *Gal.* iii. 21. Which Passages imply, what *Chrysostom* expresses; ἄλλως ἢ ἐν δικαιοῦν γενέσθαι· ἐν νόμῳ, ἀλλ' ἢ πάντα πληρώσαντα. Τίλο δὲ εἶναι γένοιντο δικαιοῦν οὐκ ἐν διαπείλῃ ἢ δικαιοσύνῃ αὐτῇ. Tom. III. pag. 148. Edit. Savil.

Ther. "Curfed is every One, that is chargeable
"with the leaft Sin; that is not perfectly righte-
"ous." I am aftonifhed at the Thought! How
wretched then is the State of Mankind!

Afp. Extremely wretched. And fo much the
more, becaufe they are folding their Hands in a lift-
lefs and gay Infenfibility; when they fhould be lift-
ing them up to GOD, for Deliverance from the
Wrath to come. Becaufe, they are fleeping in a
false Security, or dreaming in prefumptuous Hope;
while they fhould be flying to the Strong-hold, and
efcaping for their Life; even for the Life of their
immortal Souls.

The State of Mankind is moft truly defcribed by
the Prophet. The Curfe of GOD, like a tre-
mendous *Fire*, is kindled all around them, yet they
know it not; it burns, fiercer than ten thoufand fiery
Furnaces, yet they lay it not to Heart *.—O! that
the Terrors of the LORD, and the Voice of Con-
fciences, may awaken them, may rouse them, be-
fore it be too late!

Ther. Will not fuch exceffively fevere Doctrine
drive People to Defpair?

Afp. It may. It ought.—This, I apprehend, in-
creafes your Aftonifhment.—But allow me to ex-
plain myfelf. A Defpair I mean, of being recon-
ciled to the Almighty GOD, and of obtaining eter-
nal Happinefs, by any Satisfaction or any Duties
of our own. This Defpair is the Prelude to hea-
venly Hope, and holy Joy. The Gospel is a gra-
cious Provision, made by the fupreme royal Pre-
rogative, for fuch desperate Souls. In this Defpair,
I am willing to live, and defirous to die.

B 2

Ther.

* Ifai. xlii. 25.

Ther. Now You mention *willing*, how can You forget that gracious Manifesto, published by the condescending KING of Heaven; *If there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted, according to what a Man hath, not according to what He hath not* *. Is it not plain from this Text, that infinite Goodness will admit our honest, though imperfect Endeavours? And, since We are not able to pay an *unsinning*, will mercifully accept our *best* Obedience.

Asp. I do not forget, but possibly my Friend may misapply the gracious Manifesto.—To whom was the Word of this Consolation sent? To true Believers; who *were established in CHRIST* †; *were sanctified in CHRIST* ‡; and *abounded in Faith* ||.—If You likewise, my dear *Theron*, acknowledge Yourself a vile Sinner in your worst, and an unprofitable Servant in your best Estate: if, in consequence of this Acknowledgment, You fly for Refuge to the Wounds of a crucified SAVIOUR; and rely, for Salvation, only on his Obedience unto Death: then, You imitate those *Corinthian* Converts. Then You may apply that indulgent Declaration to Yourself. And then would I venture to address You, in the elegant and cheering Language of the royal PREACHER; *Go thy Way, eat thy Bread with Joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry Heart; for GOD now accepteth* § both thy Person, and thy Performances.

But,

* 2 Cor. viii. 12. † 2 Cor. i. 21. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 2.
|| 2 Cor. viii. 7.

§ *Eccles. ix. 7.*—*Aspasio's* Remark discovers an *Ambiguity* in the Word *accepted*.—If People mean, That sincere Obedience shall be accepted, as *their justifying Righteousness*; as that which constitutes their Title to everlasting

But, if You overlook the Righteousness of the blessed *JESUS*; if You depend upon Yourself and your own Attainments; You are (how shall I speak it!) not accepted, but accursed. In such a Case, You have already heard your Doom denounced, by the Leader of the *Jews*. You may hear it ratified, by the Apostle of the *Gentiles*. *As many as are of the Works of the Law*, who seek Justification by their own Observance of its Commands, *are under the Curse* *.

Ther. Under the Curse! Not because We presumptuously transgress; only because, our Attempts to obey, though faithfully exerted, are attended with Defects! Is not this unreasonable and shocking?—*Unreasonable*, that the GOD of Justice should establish a Law of such consummate Perfection, as no Child of *Adam* can, even with his utmost Affiduity and Care, fulfil? *Shocking*, that the GOD of Mercy should thunder out so severe a Denunciation, on the least inadvertent Breach, on every unavoidable

B 3

Failure?

lasting Felicity; the Proposition is extremely false.—If they mean; That the sincere Obedience of justified Persons, though very imperfect in itself, shall be *graciously regarded* in *CHRIST*; shall find Favour through his all-recommending Merit; the Sentiment is unquestionably true.

When *Tigranes* saw the resolute and intrepid *Lucullus* marching up, with a Handful of Men, to attack his Hundreds of Thousands; He said, with an Air of Rallery; *Do they come as Ambassadors? Then they are a great Number. Do they advance as Enemies? Then they are very few.* With much greater Propriety may *Aspasio* say; Is Sincerity the *Effect of Faith*? Then We may rejoice in it, with the happy Apostle, 2 *Cor.* i. 12. Would Sincerity be the *Condition of our Justification*? Then We must renounce it, with holy *Job*, Chap. ix. 15.

* *Gal.* iii. 10.

Failure?—This exceeds the relentless Rigour of *Draco*, or the tyrannical Impositions of the *Ægyptian* Task-masters. *Draco* is said to have written his Laws in Blood. Yet his Institutions, though very difficult to be observed, were not absolutely impracticable. And, though the *Ægyptian* Task-masters insisted upon the full Tale of Bricks, without allowing the full Proportion of Straw, yet the Punishment they inflicted, was incomparably less than everlasting Destruction.

Asp. The least Breach!—You take it then for granted, that some Violations of Duty are small and inconsiderable. But this Extent and Severity of the divine Law, concur to correct every such mistaken Apprehension. They inform Us; that those Sins, in which the Light of Nature could discern but little Turpitude; that those Sins of which the Voice of Reason would be apt to say, *Is it not a little one?* Even those Sins are unspeakably odious, and intolerably loathsome, in the Eye of JEHOVAH. His Nature is so pure, and his Will so righteous, that He cannot away with any Sin; He will not spare any Transgression; but pronounces a Curse, even the Curse of everlasting Condemnation, upon all Iniquity.—This bespeaks Purity and a Justice, worthy of GOD; great, transcendent, and deeply to be revered. Made sensible of this, We shall cry out with the Psalmist; *My Flesh trembleth for fear of Thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments.*

But this Severity, You imagine, clashes with the lovely Attribute of Mercy.—If GOD Almighty, in delivering his Law to fallen Mankind, intended to propose the *Means* of their *Justification*;

I own, your Argument would be valid, and your Inference undeniable. But the SUPREME LEGISLATOR had a very different, a far more mysterious Design.—However, before We proceed to touch upon this Point, let me desire to know *your* Opinion.

For what Reasons, think you, was the Law ordained?

Ther. For what Reasons?—To deter Men from the Commission of Vice, and excite them to the Practice of Virtue.—To set before them a Rule for their Conduct; which if they diligently observe, they shall be *rewarded* with eternal Happiness; which if they presumptuously transgress, they shall be *punished* with eternal Misery.

Asp. If Man had never fallen, this Doctrine had been sound Divinity; and this Method, a practicable Scheme. But, ever since the Fall, such a Way of Salvation, is somewhat like the *North-East* Passage. As Mountains of Ice, and the severest Rigours of Winter, block up *this*: so, extreme Impotence in Man, and the utmost Perfection in the Law, bar up *that*.—*The Law*, saith the Apostle, *was weak**; was absolutely unable to justify Mankind, or any individual Person. Unable, not through any Defect in its Constitutions, but *through the Flesh*; through the Corruption and Infirmary of human Nature.

Therefore, in another Place He adds; *If there had been a Law given, which could have given Life*†.

B 4

A

* *Rom. viii. 3.* To *advantus* *tu* *vovis*, says the Apostle. Which reads flat in our Version, *What the Law could not do*. But is, in the Original, a vigorous Phrase, and expresses an utter Impossibility.

† *Gal. iii. 21.*

A Way of speaking which denotes, not a Difficulty, but an *Impossibility*. Exactly like that Speech of JEHOVAH to *Abraham*; *If a Man can number the Dust of the Earth* *.—Should You ask, Why the Law could not give a Title to Life? I answer, Because fallen Man was incapable of fulfilling its Precepts.—And why was He incapable? Because those Precepts required Perfection; insisted on Perfection; and would admit of no Obedience, which came short of Perfection †, to pass for a justifying Righteousness.

—— So Man could not the moral Part Perform, and not performing, cannot live †.

This is a Truth, much to be regarded. It is a fundamental Point, and of the utmost Consequence, in the Scheme of Christianity. Yet, I know not how it is, many People have overlooked it, or mistaken

* Gen. xiii. 16.

† This, and every material Article relating to the grand Subject of Justification, are clearly stated, solidly established, and I think unanswerably defended, in a little Treatise entitled, *A Vindication of the eternal Law and everlasting Gospel*, by Mr. John Beart. When my Dialogues were first published, I was unacquainted with this most excellent Treatise. I am obliged to a benevolent Lady, for recommending it to me, and furnishing me with it. Who has at her own Expence, reprinted the Work; in order to distribute it among her Friends, and bestow it upon the Poor. By which, she does an Honour to her own Judgment, as well as a singular Service to the Christian Cause. I have met with nothing more satisfactory, or more convincing. Nothing so concise, and at the same Time so comprehensive. Whoever has this Book, has the very Sinews of the Argument, and the very Marrow of the Doctrine.

‡ MILTON, Book XII. 298.

taken it. Many well-meaning People have unwarily entertained the same Notion with my *Theron*. Not apprehensive, that they frustrate hereby the Grace of GOD, and render it of none Effect with regard to themselves.—If You examine the scriptural Account of the Law, You will find it quite of another Strain.

Ther. Pray let me hear the scriptural Account. For, whenever those DIVINE ORACLES speak, I am all Attention. Where-ever they interpose their Authority, I am all Submission.

Asp. By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin *. Far from being our Justifier, it is our Accuser. It arraigns and proves Us guilty. It demonstrates, beyond all Possibility of Contradiction, that the very best among Us, have failed and come short of our Duty; nay, that the very best among Us, have done amiss, and dealt wickedly.

I was alive without the Law once, says the Apostle †. I thought myself upright, obedient, holy; and entitled, by virtue of these Qualifications, to Life eternal. *But when the Commandment came*, shining in its Purity, and operating with Power, *Sin revived*; a clear and lively Sense of Guilt shot, like a piercing Ray, through all my Soul. I saw myself chargeable with many past Provocations, I felt myself subject to much remaining Corruption. In consequence of which, *I died*; my vain Conceits were blasted; my presumptuous Hopes expired; I could not but acknowledge myself, justly liable to Condemnation and Death.

Ther. It had this Effect on *Saul*, when He was a malignant and barbarous Persecutor. But, when
People

* Rom. iii. 20.

† Rom. vii. 9.

People are virtuous and benevolent, what Purpose does it then serve?

Asp. A very important one. Yet such as may, probably, at the first Hearing, affect You with a little Surprise. *The Law entered*, says the Apostle, *that the Offence might* —

Ther. Be restrained, no doubt.

Asp. That the Offence might abound *, is the Assertion.

Ther. Surprising indeed! Is it possible that GOD's Law should give Countenance to Sin? Nay, add Spurs to the Sinner?

Asp. Let Us beware of mistaking our sacred Casuist. *The Law entered*, not that the Commission of Sin might be *authorized*, but that the Abundance of our Sins might be *manifested*. That all Mankind, even your virtuous Persons, may perceive the great Impurity of their Hearts †; the great Multitude of their Iniquities; and the horrible Sinfulness of (what is called) the least Sin in the Sight of GOD.

This End could not be answered by a Law, relaxed in its Demands, or warping to our Weakness; only by a System of Precepts, every Way exact, and in all Degrees perfect.—Whoever would represent to his Neighbour, the Spots that fully, or the Scars that disfigure his Countenance, must effect the Design not by a stained, but by a pure Mirror.

Ther. *The Knowledge of Sin, and a Conviction of our exceeding Sinfulness!*—These are Intentions, which I should not have suspected.

Asp.

* Rom. v. 20.

† *And therefore was Law giv'n them, to evince Their natural Pravity.* MILT. B. XII. 287.

Asp. These are not all. There is another Intention of the Law, equally necessary, and no less awful. *It reveals the Wrath of GOD, against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men* *.—Having set before the Sinner, his innumerable Offences, and enormous Guilt; it proceeds to the Doom, which He deserves. It unsheaths the Sword of Justice, and threatens the Offender with everlasting Destruction. Against *all* Ungodliness, upon *every* Transgression, it denounces the Curse—the insupportable and eternal Curse of GOD.

Ther. A modern Writer supposes, that GOD may *set aside* the Law, in favour of frail Men. I might far more reasonably suppose, that He would *mitigate* the Law, on the same Consideration. But what You urge, makes me afraid to lean on so precarious a Prop.

Asp. To look for Comfort and Salvation from this Quarter, would be worse than leaning on a precarious Prop. It would be to lean, as the *Arabian* Proverb speaks, on a Wave of the Sea: which will not only fail to support, but will certainly swallow up, the unadvised and rash Depender. For *ONE* greater than any modern Writer has affirmed, that every Word or Thought, opposite to the Spirit of the Law, renders a Man liable to Hell-fire †.

Set aside or mitigate! No, *Theron*; rather than the divine Law should lose its Honours, *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* were laid in Ashes; the antient World was destroyed with a Deluge; the present Frame of Nature is destined to the Flames, and all its unholy Inhabitants will be condemned to Hell.—Nay, rather than the *least Tittle* of the Law should pass unaccom-

* Rom. i. 18.

† Matt. v. 22, 29, 30.

unaccomplished, its Curse has been executed on GOD's own SON; and all its Injunctions have been fulfilled, in the Person of *JESUS CHRIST*. Which demonstrates the DEITY to be inflexibly in earnest, as to every Word, spoken in his perfect Law.

Ther. As I dare not confide in the modern provi-
sionary *Salvo*, so neither can I accede to your severe
and terrifying Notions.—The Laws of a wise and
beneficent Governor, are calculated for the *Good* of
his Subjects. What Good, what Advantage can
accrue to Us, from receiving such a Sentence, and
possessing such Convictions?

Asp. Though I might mention many Advantages,
I shall content myself with selecting one. Which
is not only valuable in itself, but the Introduction
to every spiritual Blessing.—When, by the Instru-
mentality of the Law, and the Illumination of the
SPIRIT, We are brought under such Convic-
tions; then We are taught to *see* our Danger; then
We are made to *feel* our Misery: and then We
shall no longer sleep in Security, but solicitously
look out for Deliverance, and gladly accept the
sovereign Remedy,

Ther. The Law, according to your Representa-
tion, is intended to *accuse* me—to *convict* me—to
condemn me. So it becomes, instead of a salutary,
a killing System.

Asp. *The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life* *.
If We adhere to the literal Sense, without attending
to the spiritual Design: if We regard only the Pre-
cept and the Sanction, as they stand in *themselves*;
and neither consider, nor improve them, as acting in

Subser-

* 2 Cor. iii. 6.

DIALOGUE IX. 29

Subserviency to the MEDIATOR's Righteousness; they are doubtless a killing Ordinance, and bind Us down under a Sentence of Death. But rightly improved—Hold! Let me proceed no farther with the Argument.

You are a Sportsman, *Theron*, and delight in the manly Recreations of the Field. You must therefore have read that fine Poem, which so elegantly describes your favourite Diversion.

Ther. The CHACE, I suppose, You mean.

Asp. The same.—Do You remember the Description of the *royal Stag Chace*?

Ther. Perfectly well. It is not a Week, since I perused the whole Passage; and with as much Pleasure, as if it had been entirely new.

Asp. Then You can give me a Summary of the agreeable Narrative.

Ther. I can. But will not this Chace lead Us very far from our Subject?

Asp. Perhaps, not so far as You imagine. I have a Reason for my Request.

Ther. What Reason, I beseech You?

Asp. You shall soon know. Only favour me with the Account.

Ther. I protest, I cannot discern the least Connection, between these rural Sports, and the grand Topic of our Conversation. However, since You command, I will implicitly obey.

The Stag, roused from his Lair, shakes his dappled Sides; tosses his beamy Head; and, conscious of superior Agility, seems to defy the gathering Storm.—You see, speaking of Poetry, I have caught something of the poetical Strain.

Asp.

Asp. So much the better. This enlivened Manner excites my Curiosity. It makes me more desirous to hear the Sequel.

Ther. First, He has recourse to Stratagem, and evasive Shifts. He plunges into the Copse; darts across the Glade; and wheels about in doubling Mazes; as though He would pursue, even the Foe He avoids. The full-mouthed Pack unravel all his Windings, and drive Him from his wily Arts.

Now, He betakes Himself to Flight, and confides in his Speed. He bursts through the Woods; bounds over the Lawns; and leaves the lagging Beagles far behind. The Beagles slow, but sure, trace his Steps, through Woods, through Lawns, through half the extended Forest. Unwearied, still unwearied, they urge their ardent Way, and gain upon the alarmed Object of their Pursuit.

Again He flies. Flies with redoubled Swiftmess. Shoots down the Steep; strains up the Hill; sweeps along the Fields; and, at last, takes shelter in the inmost Recess of some sequestered Grove. The sagacious Hounds hang, with greedy Nostrils, on the Scent. They recover, by indefatigable Assiduity, the Ground they had lost. Up they come a third Time; and, joining in a general Peal of Vengeance, hurry the affrighted Animal from his short Concealment.

Perplexed, and in the utmost Distress, He seeks the numerous Herd. He would lose Himself, and elude his Pursuers, amidst the Multitude of his Fellows. But they, unconcerned for a Brother's Woe, shun the miserable Creature, or expel him from the selfish Circle.—Abandoned by his Associates, and haunted with Apprehensions of approaching Ruin,

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He trembles at every Leaf that shakes. He starts; He springs; and wild, and swift as the Wind, flies he knows not where, yet pours all his Soul in Flight.—Vain, vain are his Efforts. The horrid Cry, lately lessened, thickens upon the Gale, and thunders in his Ear.—Now, the poor breathless Victim is full in View. His Sprightliness forsakes Him. His Agility is spent. See! How He toils in yonder Valley, with faltering Limbs, and a hobbling Gait. The Sight of their Game, quickens the Pace, and whets the Ardour, of the impetuous Hounds. With tumultuous Violence they rush in, and with clamorous Joy demand their Prey.

What can He do? Surrounded as He is, with insulting Tongues, and ravenous Jaws? Despair is capable of inspiriting even the timorous Breast. Having nothing to hope, He forgets to fear. He faces about, and makes a resolute Stand. The Trunk of a sturdy Tree, covers his Rear; and his own branching Horns, defend Him in Front. He rushes upon his Adversaries; goars some; lays others groveling on the Turf; and makes the whole coward Pack give way.

Encouraged by this unexpected Success, his Hopes revive. He rallies once again his drooping Spirits; exerts the little Remainder of his Strength; and springs through the Midst of the retiring Rout.—It is his last, last Chance. He stretches every Nerve; once more loses Sight of the Rabble from the Kennel; and, finding no Security on the Land, takes to the Water. He throws his burning Sides into the River; sails down the cooling Stream; and sinks away to the Verge of some little shelving Island. There, finding a Resting-place for his Feet,

Feet, He skulks close to the shady Margin. All immersed in the Wave, excepting only his Nostrils, He baffles, for a while, the prying Eye of Man, and the keener Smell of Brute.

Discovered, at length, and forced to quit this unavailing Refuge, He climbs the slippery Bank. Unable to fly any longer, He stands at bay against an aged Willow. Stands, all faint with Toil, and sobbing with Anguish. The Crouds that gather round Him, with merciless and outrageous Transport, triumph in his Misery. A Multitude of blood-thirsty Throats, joined with the sonorous Horn, ring his funeral Knell.—The Tears, till this fatal Instant unknown, gush from his languishing Eyes, and roll down his reeking Cheeks. He casts one more Look on the Woods, the Lawns, the pleasing Scenes of his former Delights. Adieu! A long Adieu to these! He now expects his Murderers; and prepares, as his last poor Consolation, to sell his Life as dear as possible.

At this most critical Juncture, the *royal* Sportsman comes up. He sees the distressed Creature; and, as soon as he sees, He pities. The Clemency, which attends the Throne, accompanies even the Diversions of Majesty. He issues the high Command. The prohibitory Signal is given. The Pack, though eager for Blood, are checked in a Moment. And not checked only, but called off * from the Prey,

Disap-

* *Called off*, I apprehend, is too flat. *Tore off* would have been more expressive. And this would have reminded Us of a most beautiful Metaphor, used by the sacred Historian; when He describes, or rather paints, the Procedure of *David*, in the Cave, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 7. His Men urged Him, and with great Vehemence, to slay *Saul*; since Providence had delivered that implacable

Persecutor

Disappointed and growling, they retire; and leave the intended Victim of their Fury, to enjoy his Liberty, his Safety, and his Ease again.

I have now followed the Stag, till I have tired your Patience. Why did You suffer me to run on, at this extravagant Rate? You know I am, on these favourite Topics, an everlasting Talker.

Asp. Why this Apology, *Theron*? I am sure You did not see my Mouth yawn, or my Head nod, while You was pursuing your Subject. Besides, I intend to make Reprisals, and put *your* Attention to the same Tryal.

Thus the Strictness of the *Law* pursues the Soul; dislodges it from every Refuge of Lies; and never remits its terrifying Menaces, till the poor Delinquent ceases from Self-confidence, and fixes on *CHRIST* for his whole Salvation *.

The Man, perhaps, is awakened into a serious Concern for his eternal State. In consequence of

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C

which,

Persecutor into his Hand. Our Translation says, *He broke them*. Whereas the Original says, *He tore them off*, eager and impatient as they were; and retained them from murdering the helpless King.—It seems to be an Allusion to the above-mentioned Practice of Huntsmen; who *tear off* the ravenous Pack, and with-hold them from devouring the fallen Prey.—It is the same Word, which expresses the Action of *Sampson*; when *He rent asunder* the young Lion, and tore Him Limb from Limb. *ydw*. See *Judg.* xiv. 6.

* *Lex Hominem urget, donec is ad CHRISTUM confugit. Tum ipsa dicit; Asylum es nactus; desino Te persequi; sapis, saluus es.* BENIGEL. That is; the *Law* urges and pursues the Sinner, till He flies for Refuge to *JESUS CHRIST*. Then the *Law* speaks to this Effect; "You are entered into the *Strong-hold*, and I remit the Pursuit; my Demands are satisfied, and my Curses silenced. You are wise; You are safe; You are happy."

which, He relinquishes his profane and iniquitous Practices. Breaks the Sabbath, and defrauds his Neighbour no more.—But the Law quickly represents, and in a glaring Light, that a *negative* Obedience is by no means sufficient.

Upon this, He betakes Himself to a Course of *positive* Holiness. Gets acquainted with religious People, and performs religious Duties. Prays in secret, and attends public Ordinances. Conscientiously observes the LORD's Day, and regulates his Behaviour by the Rule of GOD's Commandments. Now, He is ready to congratulate Himself on his remarkable and hopeful Reformation.

Soon he perceives, that all his Proficiency is but Skin-deep: a mere *outside* Varnish: which has not penetrated the inner Man. He begins, therefore, to watch over the Motions, and bewail the Evils of his Heart. He labours to subdue Pride, and curb Passion; to purge out filthy Lusts, and to banish spiritual Wickedness. Notwithstanding all his Vigilance, Conscience flies in his Face, either for the Neglect of some Virtue, or the Commission of some Sin. The Law rings in his Ear that terrible Denunciation; “Curfed is He, that performeth not
“all Things.”

Struck by this Conviction, his Wounds bleed afresh. He is obliged to seek some new Balm for his Sore. In order to appease an offended GOD, and atone for his sinful Relapses, He makes many sorrowful Confessions; possibly, submits to voluntary Sufferings. He denies Himself, and bestows liberally on the Poor. He sighs deeply, and mourns bitterly.—But can Waters that are muddy, cleanse the Garment that is filthy? Wilt Thou satisfy, O

vain Man, wilt Thou satisfy for one Sin, by committing another? In *these* penitential Exercises, were thy Thoughts steadily devout? In *those* Acts of Beneficence, were thy Affections truly charitable? And did *both* proceed from a pure undefiled Heart? If not, such fancied Reparations of past Faults, only aggravate the heavy Score.

What shall He do? He cannot pay. To beg He is ashamed. Fain would He enter into Life, yet not be too much indebted to Grace. He attempts therefore to *compound* with Heaven. He binds Himself by solemn Vows, perhaps by sacramental Engagements, to use greater Circumspection for the future. Then turns his Eye to the divine MEDIATOR; not with a View of relying wholly on his Righteousness; but only to obtain such a Supply, as may make up the Deficiencies of his own.—Somewhat like this was the Mistake of the *Galatian* Converts; against which St. *Paul*, in his Epistle to that People, so solidly disputes, and so sharply inveighs*. Assuring them, that if they add to their REDEEMER's Death and Obedience, any other Requisite whatsoever, in the Matter of Acceptance with GOD, *CHRIST shall profit them nothing*.

For a while, He holds fast his purposed Integrity. At length, falling short, evidently if not scandalously short, in executing his Part, a startling

C 2

Voice

* *Sharply* indeed! For, instead of saluting them, under the honourable Title of *Saints, and Faithful in CHRIST JESUS*; He stigmatizes them with that severe Appellation, *O foolish Galatians!*—And as to their Practice, which was a Departure from Justification by *CHRIST alone*, He styles it, not merely an Error, but an Error of the most mischievous and horrid Kind—an Infatuation, a Bewitchery, *Tis to be avoided*. Gal. iii. 1.

Voice sounds in his Ear, that dreadful Alarm;
 “Curfed is He that *continueth* not in all Things.”
 An impartial Conscience interprets the Voice; and
 undeniably proves, that whoever commits the leaft
 Sin, or fails in any Point, does not continue in all
 Things. His Heart finks with Discouragement,
 and all his Resolutions hang their enfeebled Heads.
 He has tried every Method, that He can devise;
 and has found every Method ineffectual. All his
 Expedients are a Spider’s Web; and his Hope is,
 as the Giving up of the Ghost *.

His Soul, purfued by the Law, and hunted by
 Terror, is brought to the Gates of Death, or the
 very Brink of Defpair. And now the PRINCE
 of Peace, now the LORD our Righteousnefs,
 appears for his Refcure. Now is accomplished that
 gracious Declaration; *O Ifrael, thou haft destroyed
 thyfelf, but in me is thy Help* †.—Driven from every
 falfe Refuge, and drawn by the blessed SPIRIT,
 He comes weary and heavy laden to *CHRIST*.
 Convinced of the Sin of his Nature, the Sin of his
 Life,

* St. Paul expreffes all this in his ufual Manner; that
 is, very concifely, yet very forcibly, *Gal. iii. 23.* Υπο
 νομον εφρεμεμεθα φυκελευσμενοι εις την πισιν. *We were kept un-
 der the Law, fcut up unto Faith.* He compares the Law,
 its Demands and its Curfes, to a *Garrison* or *Prifon*.
 The Walls fo ftrong, that it is impoffible to make a Breach
 in them; fo high, that it is equally impoffible to over-
 leap them. Let the confined Captive, turn which Way
 He will, make whatever Attempt He can, there appears
 no Hope of a Release; nay, there remains no Poffibility
 of Escape. *Until* the blessed REDEEMER, by his
 Obedience and Death, open a Door of Deliverance.
 This Door Faith difcerns; through this Door Faith con-
 ducts the Sinner; and thus tranfmits Him into Light
 and Liberty.

† Hof. xiii. 9.

Life, and the Sin of his best Duties, He renounces Himself in every View. This is all his Salvation, and all his Desire, that He may win *CHRIST*, and be found in Him. Did that poor afflicted Woman say, *If I may but touch his Garment, I shall be whole?* With equal Ardour does this enlightened Sinner cry; “If I may but have Fellowship with the glorious *IMMANUEL*, in his Merits and in his Spirit, I am alive from the Dead; I am happy for ever.”

Having seen a Glimpse of the *REDEEMER* and his transcendent Excellency; having received a Taste from the inexhaustible Fulness of his Grace; O! how He longs for brighter Manifestations! How He thirsts after more plentiful Draughts!—*Whoever comes to CHRIST, shall in no wise be cast out.* He that awakens these ardent Desires, in his due Time gives the desired Blessings. After various Conflicts, the poor *ungodly* Wretch *believes* *. He believes, that the *SON* of the *MOST HIGH* died in *his* Stead, and was obedient for *his* Justification. Believes, that all the Riches of the adored *MEDIATOR*’s Life and Death are for Sinners—for the worst of Sinners—for *Him* †.

By

* Rom. iv. 5.

† See this Work of Grace, and Procedure of Conversion, more copiously displayed, in a valuable little Piece intitled, *Human Nature in its fourfold State*, by Mr. THOMAS BOSTON, page 227.—Which, in my Opinion, is one of our best Books for common Readers. The Sentences are short, and the Comparisons striking. The Language is easy, and the Doctrine evangelical. The Method proper, the Plan comprehensive, the Manner searching, convincing, yet consolatory.—If another celebrated Treatise is styled, *The whole Duty of Man*, I would

By this Faith, receiving *CHRIST* and his Benefits, his Heart is purified; his Heart is quickened. He abhors every evil Way, and is fitted for every good Work.—Though Temptations assault Him, He derives Strength from his SAVIOUR; resists the Devil; and is faithful unto Death.—Though Corruptions defile Him, He flies to the *Fountain opened for Uncleanness* *; makes daily, hourly Application of the Blood of Sprinkling; and goes on his Way, rejoicing in GOD his SAVIOUR.

Ther. Your Discourse puts me in mind of *Abalom's* Procedure, when *Joab* refused to make Him a Visit. The Prince ordered his Servants to set on fire the General's standing Corn †. This Stratagem had its intended Effect. The Apprehension of Danger *drove* Him, when the respectful Invitation would not *lead* Him, to a personal Interview. You seem to suppose, that the Law was made so perfect and so rigorous, with some such Design. A Design, to lay Us under a *Necessity*, of renouncing our own Works, and flying to the Atonement of *CHRIST*.

Asp. With such a Design it was delivered on *Sinai*. And for this Opinion, I have a far better Authority, than my own Supposition. We are assured by unerring Wisdom, That *CHRIST* is the *End of the Law* †. It points invariably to Him. It terminates wholly in Him. And *then* obtains its principal Purpose, when Sinners are brought to their call this, *The WHOLE of Man*. As it comprises—what He *was* by Creation—what He *is* by Transgression—what He *should be* through Grace—and then what He *will be* in Glory.

* Zech. xiii. 1. † 2 Sam. xiv. 30. † Rom. x. 4.

their Divine REDEEMER, for Righteousness. Then, there is no Occasion for a *Mitigation* of the Law; for an Abatement of its Demands, or a Moderation of its Curse. Because, We have *that* in *CHRIST*, which fulfils its Demands and exhausts its Curse; which maintains its Honour, yet justifies its Transgressor.

The Law hath concluded all Mankind under Sin *. Hath drawn, as it were, a Net of Guilt and Vengeance round the whole World. Yet not with an Intention, that any should be discouraged now, or perish for ever: but that every One may see his inexpressible Need, of a SAVIOUR's Death, and of a SAVIOUR's Obedience †. That, being

* *Gal. iii. 22. (συγκλεισε).*—The sacred Original is somewhat more comprehensive than *Aspasio's* Interpretation. It is not *παλαια*, but *παντα*. Which denotes *Things*, as well as *Persons*: And implies, that nothing We *have*, nothing We *do*, is free from Sin; till the Merits of *CHRIST* intervene, and the Blood of *CHRIST* be sprinkled.

† *Witfius*, speaking of the Law delivered at *Sinai*, says; *Facta est ista Fœderis Operum Commemoratio, ad Israelitas Peccatorum & Miseriæ suæ convincendos, ex seipsis expellendos, de Necessitate Satisfactionis edocendos, & ad CHRISTUM compellendos: & sic inser-vit Fœderi Gratia.*

Animadver. IREN. p. 99.

The *Nature* and *Design* of the Law were, I think, emblematically taught, by the Circumstances attending its *Delivery*.—The Mountain, not to be trodden by any *Israelite*, or touched by any *Beast*, on pain of Death—The Voice of Thunder, and the Glare of Lightning—The Sound of the Trumpet, and the Clouds of Smoke—The vast Range of Hills and Rocks, trembling to their Center—Six hundred thousand Men struck with inexpressible Consternation—And *Moses*, even *Moses* himself, the Favourite of Heaven, terrified exceedingly—All these indicated,

being thus prepared, both to value and receive so precious a Blessing, *the Promise of Justification by Faith in JESUS CHRIST may be given—freely given to them that believe.*

Let Us advert to this grand Aim of the Law. Then, We shall see Goodness, unquestionable and sovereign Goodness, in forming its Constitution so *sublimely perfect*, and making its Threatenings so *inflexibly severe*. Exclusive of this wholesome Severity, We should supinely disesteem, perhaps, wantonly reject, the Grace of the Gospel.—The *prodigal Son* would never have returned to his Father, in that humble, submissive, supplicating Posture; if He had not found his Circumstances utterly ruined, and felt Himself perishing with Hunger. No more would the conceited Sons of *Adam*, disclaim all Pretence to any Merit of their own; and, with the Halter * of Self-condemnation about their Necks, fall down at the Feet of a merciful REDEEMER; if they were not instigated by the sharp Goad, or rather driven by the flaming Sword of the Law.

Ther.

icated the *righteous*, the *rigorous*, and the *awful* Import of “The Word spoken.”

Nor was the *Effect* of these astonishing Incidents, without a spiritual Meaning. The People durst not adventure upon a *personal* Approach, but had recourse to a *Mediator*. They requested, that *Moses* might interpose; and transact Affairs, between the terrible JEHOVAH, and the guilty Congregation.—Such an Impression, the Purity and the Rigour of the Law, should make on our Hearts: should drive Us from Self to a SAVIOUR; deter Us from confiding in the Righteousness of Works, and urge Us to seek the Righteousness of free Grace.

* Alluding to those remarkable Words of *Benhadad's* Servants; *Let Us put Sackcloth upon our Loin, and Ropes upon our Heads, and go out to meet the King of Israel; peradventure He will save thy Life,* 1 Kings xx. 31.

Ther. Has the Law then nothing to do with our Temper and Conversation? Is it no longer to be considered as a System of Duties? No longer to be regarded as a Rule of Life?

Asp. When it has forced the Lines of Self-righteousness, and driven Us to *JESUS CHRIST* (that only Citadel of Safety!) for Acceptance and Salvation; *then* it serves as a Rule for our Conduct. *Then* it shews Us, like a Friend and a Guide, how to order our Conversation, and adorn our Profession; how to glorify *GOD*, and express our Gratitude to *CHRIST*. But, till it has accomplished the fore-mentioned End, it thunders Vengeance; it flashes Terror; it is, as *Moses* speaks, *a fiery Law* *.

And is it, my dear *Theron*, a fiery Law? What then shall We do, without that meritorious Obedience of the *REDEEMER*; which is, to the guilty Soul, *as the Cold of Snow in the Time of Harvest* †.—Is it a Law, which *worketh Wrath*? Then let it endear to our Affections that inestimably precious Gospel, which *preacheth Peace by JESUS CHRIST* ‡.—Is it *the Ministration of Condemnation* ||? O! let it quicken our Flight to that All-gracious *SURETY*, who was condemned at *Pilate's Bar*, that we may be acquitted at *GOD's Tribunal*.

To

* *Fiery Law*, Deut. xxxiii. 2. I dare not affirm, that this is the exact Import of the Original, nor do I presume to determine the precise Signification of a Phrase, so remarkably difficult. But as this is our received Version; as it suggests a very *useful* Truth: and a Truth, which, in the present Age, is peculiarly *needful* to be inculcated; I am inclined to acquiesce in the common Rendering.

† Prov. xxv. 13. ‡ Acts x. 36. || 2 Cor. iii. 19.

To all this agrees our celebrated *Milton*. Whose Divinity on this Subject at least, is as faultless, as his Poetry is matchless. You will give me Leave to quote a few of his beautiful Lines. Which *recapitulate*, as it were, the whole preceding Conversation: and, while they recapitulate the Conversation, *confirm* the Doctrine. This will make you some Amends, for my late tedious Harangue. This will tip the Lead with Gold.

*So Law appears imperfect; and but giv'n
With Purpose to resign them, in full Time,
Up to a better Cov'nant; disciplin'd
From shadowy Types to Truth; from Flesh to Spirit;
From Imposition of strict Laws, to free
Acceptance of large Grace; from servile Fear,
To filial; Works of Law, to Works of Faith*.*

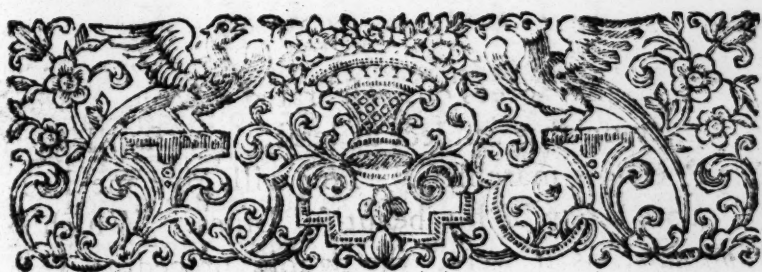
* Book XII. 300.



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DIALOGUE X.

ASPASIO.



AGAIN, *Theron*! Must we never lay aside the Weapons of Controversy?— You put me in mind of the resolute *Athenian*; who, having fought with distinguished Bravery on the Field of *Marathon*, pursued the vanquished *Persians* to their Fleet. At that very Instant, a Galley full of the Enemies Troops, was putting off to Sea. Determined, if possible, to prevent their Escape, He laid hold on the Vessel with his Right-hand. Which was no sooner fixed, than chopped off by the Sailors. The Warrior, not at all discouraged, seized it with his Left. When that also was cut away, He fastened his Teeth in its Side; and never quitted his Gripe, till He resigned his Breath *.

Ther.

* The *Athenian's* Name was *Cynægyrus*. The Author, who relates this extraordinary Story, is *Justin*. If the Reader should think it a *Rhodomontade*, I believe, He will not judge amiss. And I promise myself, the same good Sense will enable Him to distinguish, between what is hinted by way of *Pleasantry*, and what is urged by way of Argument.

Ther. I have been reconsidering the Case of *imputed Righteousness*; and am by no means satisfied, as to the Propriety of the Phrase, or the Truth of the Doctrine; especially, in the Sense which You espouse. — Objections arise, more substantial and weighty, than any that have hitherto been urged. And which, if I mistake not, You will find it a more difficult Task to answer.

Asp. I must do my best. And if my best Attempts prove unsuccessful, I shall say with the gallant *Iphicrates*, when overpowered by the Eloquence of his Antagonist; “ My Adversary is the better Actor, but mine is the better Play.”

I say *better*—For to You, *Theron*, I will freely own, what to another Person I should not be so forward to disclose; That I receive no Comfort, but from the habitual Belief, and daily Application of this precious Doctrine.—Whenever I read the most correct and elaborate Writings, which proceed in the contrary Strain, I feel my Spirits heavy; I find my Prospects gloomy; and not one Ray of Consolation gleams upon my Mind. Whereas, *much meaner* Compositions, which breathe the Savour of this evangelical Uction, seldom fail to quicken my Hopes; to brighten my Views; and put into my Mouth that piously alert Profession of the Psalmist, *I will run the Way of thy Commandments, now Thou hast set my Heart at liberty* *.—Though I am far from laying any considerable Strefs upon this Observation; farther still from advancing it into the Place of an Argument; yet I may be permitted to mention it, in the Confidence and Familiarity of Friendship.

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* Psal. cxix. 32.

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Ther. An Opinion delivered with so much Modesty, and so nearly connected with my *Aspasio's* Comfort, has doubtless a Claim to my serious Attention. Otherwise, it might possibly provoke my Raillery. For, You must know, I am no great Admirer of inward Feelings. I cannot think them a very solid Method of demonstrating your Point. It must be enforced by better Reasons, if you would gain it Access to my Heart.

We must place, You say, a Dependence upon the *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, in all that He has *done* and *suffered*. What HE has done and suffered, You add, is our only justifying Righteousness: and, to place our Dependence on it, is the only Way to receive Pardon of Sins; the only Way to inherit eternal Life.

Asp. I have said it, *Theron*, and I abide by it. This being the Righteousness of GOD, is—

Ther. Give me Leave, before You proceed farther, to propose a Query. Does the Righteousness of GOD signify the active and passive Obedience of *CHRIST*?

Asp. Righteousness is a Conformity to the Law, in Heart, and in Life. As the SON of GOD voluntarily made Himself subject to the Law; perfectly fulfilled its Precepts; and suffered to the utmost its Penalty; this, I should imagine, furnishes Us with the *truest* and *noblest* Signification of the Phrase.

Ther. What, if I or Others should imagine quite the Reverse?

Asp. I thank my Friend for his Admonition. It is indeed taking too much upon me, to suppose, that my *bare* Imagination should pass for Orthodoxy

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and Truth.—But is there nothing weighty in the Reason, which I have alledged? Was there no Righteousness in our LORD's most free Submission to the Commands of the Law, and in his persevering Performance of all holy Duties? Was there no Righteousness in the consummate Excellency of his Nature, his Temper, his Conversation? No Righteousness in the matchless Perfection of his Acting, his Abstaining *, his Suffering? Nay; was not this Obedience, in the most plain and full Sense of the Expression, *The Righteousness of GOD*? Did it not, in every Sense of the Expression, and in every View of the Subject, answer the exalted Character? Being, as a masterly Critic explains the Phrase, “A Righteousness devised by GOD
“ the FATHER, from all Eternity; wrought
“ out by GOD the SON, in the Person of
“ *JESUS CHRIST*; applied by GOD the
“ *HOLY GHOST*, to the Sinner's Soul.”

Ther. This Doctrine of yours, if I rightly understand it, would make Remission of Sins but one *half* of our Justification; and something else necessary, in order to Life eternal. Which is just as rational, as to suppose, That though one Cause may expel Darkness, another must supervene, in order to introduce Light.

Asp. The Nature of Justification, and the Nature of Condemnation, are two *Opposites*, which will mutually illustrate each other.—What is implied in the Condemnation of a Sinner? He forfeits eternal Life, and is doomed to eternal Death.—What is included

* Alluding to the Summary of moral Duties, given Us by *Epicætetus*, in that well-known Adagy, *Απὸ τοῦ κακοῦ ἀφεῖναι τὸ καλόν*.

included in the Justification of a Sinner? It super-
sedes his Obligation to Punishment, and invests
Him with a Title to Happiness. *Both* which are
procured by *CHRIST*'s Mediation in our Be-
half; and *both* take place, when we are united to
that Divine HEAD.—We suppose, therefore, a
Difference between the Benefits; but have no No-
tion of deriving them from two different Sources.
We ascribe them both to one and the same All-
sufficient Cause, *JESUS CHRIST the righteous.*

Your Comparison, though intended to overthrow,
I think, fully establishes the Sentiment.—When
yonder bright Orb makes his first Appearance in the
East, what Effects are produced? The Shades of
Night are dispersed, and the Light of Day is dif-
fused.—To what are they owing? Each to a sepa-
rate, or both to the same Origin? Every one's Ex-
perience will answer the Question. Thus, when
the Author of Salvation is manifested in the Soul,
He brings *at once* Pardon and Acceptance. Both
which constitute the *Healing* * of the Nations;
and both seem necessary to complete the Blessing of
Justification.

To illustrate this Point, We will suppose *Adam*,
continuing in Innocence, and persevering in Obe-
dience. We will suppose Him come to the last
Period of his Abode on Earth; appearing before
the SUPREME JUDGE, as a Candidate for eternal
Life. How would his Sentence run? “Thou
“hast been a Rebel; but infinite Mercy forgives
“Thee.” Would it not rather proceed in this
Manner? “Thou art perfectly righteous; Thou
“hast been completely obedient; therefore, infi-
“nite

* Mal. iv. 2.

"nite Fidelity rewards Thee." Now, how could *CHRIST* bruise the *Serpent's Head*? How remedy the direful Effects of the Fall, and restore the Happiness lost by *Adam*; if He did not both take away our Guilt, and put Us in Possession of a perfect Righteousness?

Ther. This, I know, is the fine-spun Theory of your systematic Divines. But where is their *Warrant* from Scripture? By what Authority do they introduce such subtle Distinctions?

Asp. I cannot think the Distinction so subtle, or the Theory so finely spun. To be released from the damnatory Sentence, is one Thing; to be treated as a righteous Person, is evidently another.—*Abfalom* was pardoned, when He received a Permission to remove from *Geshur*, and dwell at *Jerusalem*. But this was very different from the Recommencement of filial Intercourse, and parental Endearment*. A Rebel may be exempted from the capital Punishment, which his traiterous Practices deserve; without being restored to the Dignity of his former State, or the Rights of a loyal Subject. In Christianity likewise, to be freed from the Charge of Guilt, and to be regarded as righteous Persons, are two several Blessings; really distinct in themselves, often distinguished in Scripture, though always included in the very Essence of Justification.

Ther. Where are they distinguished? In what Texts of Scripture? This is what I called for—your scriptural Warrant.

Asp. What think You of *Job's* Reply to his censorious Friends? *GOD* forbid, that I should justify You.

* 2 Sam. xiv. 24.

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* Job x
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† 1 King
Psal. li. 6.

You *! That He *forgave* them, there is no Doubt. Yet he could not *justify* them: could not allow their Reflections to be equitable, or their Behaviour charitable.

What think You of Solomon's Supplication? *Then hear Thou in Heaven, and do, and judge thy Servants; condemning the Wicked, to bring his Way upon his Head; and justifying the Righteous, to give Him according to his Righteousness* †. To condemn, in this Passage, evidently signifies to pronounce guilty, and obnoxious to Punishment. By Parity of Reason, to *justify* must denote to pronounce righteous, and intitled to Happinefs.

What says Solomon's Father? *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O LORD! For, in thy Sight, shall no Man living be justified* ‡. A Man might be *pardoned*, if judged according to the Tenour of his own Obedience. But no Man could be *declared righteous*, in consequence of such a Tryal: this, before the supreme Tribunal, were absolutely and universally impossible.

From all which Passages I conclude; That, to be accounted righteous, is different from, is superior to, the bare Remission of Sin. Is as our Church expresses it, *Of unjust to be made just before GOD.*

VOL. II.

D

Ther.

* Job xxvii. 5. *Vos justos in Causâ vestra adversus me pronuntiem.* SCHULT. See the Word פְּרִיטִים *Isai.* 1. 8. Bengelius has, with his usual Solidity and Correctness, explained the Meaning of *δικαιωσάτω*. *Est autem Significatus ille valde prægnans; ut quam late patet Peccatum cum Reatu & Vitio, tam late ex adverso pateat Justitia. Denotans omne id, quo Homo sit, & judicetur, & dicatur justus.*

† 1 Kings viii. 32.

‡ Psal. cxliii. 2. See also

Psal. li. 6. *Heb. Bib.*

Ther. All these Instances are selected from the *Old Testament*. The *New*, if I mistake not, speaks another Language. Consider the Case of the penitent *Publican*. What does He request? *GOD be merciful to me a Sinner!* What does He obtain? *He went down to his House justified* *. If then the Petition and the Grant may be deemed correspondent, Pardon and Justification must be reckoned equivalent.

Asp. The *Old* and the *New Testament* are, in their Style and Contents, exactly correspondent. *Echo*, in yonder Cloysters, does not more punctually reverberate the Speaker's Voice, than those divine Books harmonize with each other.

It will not follow, from the *Publican's* Request and the *Publican's* Blessing, That Pardon and Justification are the same. Only, That *GOD's* Bounty frequently exceeds our Prayers, and is larger than our Expectations. Or, that the Blessing which was implored, and the Blessing which was vouchsafed, are inseparably connected, and always accompany each other.

That they are not the same, will appear from an Instance recorded in the *New Testament*. The Instance I mean, of *CHRIST* and *Barabbas*.—Of *Barabbas* the Judge might properly say; “He is a notorious Malefactor. But I acquit Him. I release Him.” This is Pardon.—Of *CHRIST* the Judge actually said; *I find no Fault at all in Him*. To which the Centurion added; *Certainly this was a righteous Man*. This is Justification.

What I am asserting, will more evidently appear, from that gracious Proclamation, made by the sa-

* Luke xviii. 13, 14.

cred Herald; *Be it known unto You, Men and Brethren, that through this Man is preached unto You the Forgiveness of Sins: and by Him, all that believe, are JUSTIFIED from all Things.* Did the captive Grecians leap for Joy, did they rend the very Air with their Shouts? When the Cryer, by Command of the Roman General, proclaimed Liberty—wished for Liberty to them all? And shall not our Hearts spring with Transport and Gratitude, when We hear this Message of Mercy from the Ambassador of Heaven! Let Us dwell upon it, a Moment. It may drop Balm on our Consciences, while it yields Argument for our Dispute.

“*Through this SAVIOUR, by his Order and in his Name, I propose to your Acceptance the free, the full, the absolute Forgiveness of all your Sins. By which You shall be discharged from Guilt; delivered from Punishment; and rescued from all the dreadful Consequences of your Iniquities.*”—Inestimable Grant! Yet, in the last Clause, it proceeds to a Patent of Honour.—“*Through this JESUS, who is both GOD and Man, who was dead and is alive for evermore, all that believe are JUSTIFIED.*” The Verdict runs in their Favour. They are pronounced righteous in open Court. Justice itself declares, “*They are without Spot and blameless.*”

Ther. If this be Justification, it is a high Privilege indeed. Too high, methinks, for sinful Man to expect.

Assp. It is too high, infinitely too high, for sinful Man to attain by any Obedience of his own. But not too high for the Righteousness of *CHRIST* to procure, nor for the Grace of *GOD* to confer.

—I appeal to yourself, whether this is not the customary and obvious Signification of the Word. When a Criminal has been found guilty, but is freed from Punishment, We may say of such a One, “He is pardoned;” We never say, “He is justified.” Then only a Person is justified, when his Righteousness is made clear as the Light.

This the very Genius of our Language implies, and with this the Doctrine of the Apostle accords. St. Paul mentions *A Justification of Life*. Not barely an Exemption from the Sentence of Death; but such a Justification, as gives a *Title* * to the Reward of Life. The Words are very emphatical. We shall injure the Dignity of their Meaning, if We understand them in a more contracted Sense.—Towards the Close of the same Chapter, We have another Passage, rich with Consolation, and full to our Purpose. *Grace reigneth through Righteousness unto eternal Life* †. Here, is pointed out the *prime Source* of all our Blessings, infinitely free and triumphant Grace: The *meritorious Cause*, not any Works of Man, not any Qualifications of our own, but the perfect Righteousness of our LORD JESUS CHRIST: The *Effect* or *End* of all; which

is,

* Rom. v. 18. *Δικαιωσις; ὧν ἐστὶν Declaratio divina illa, qua Peccator, Mortis reus, Vitæ adjudicatur; idque Jure.* BENDEL. This I take to be the precise Meaning of Justification. Pardon is founded upon Clemency in the Judge: Justification upon Righteousness in the Party arraigned. Where there is any, though it be but the least Fault, an upright *earthly* Judge cannot justify. Much less will the infinitely righteous Judge of Quick and Dead. But Sinners having, in the Obedience of CHRIST, a *most perfect* Righteousness, are justified, *idque jure*, and that on Principles of Equity.

† Rom. v. 21.

is; not barely an Absolution from Guilt, but an Instatement in Life; a Life of holy Communion with GOD in this World, to be crowned with an eternal Fruition of Him in another.

Accordingly, eternal Life is called *The Hope*, not of Forgiveness, but of *Righteousness* *. And it is bestowed, not barely because of Absolution, but *because of Righteousness* †.—I think, therefore, We have very sufficient Reason to distinguish, between the *Pardon* which delivers from Hell, and the *Righteousness* which intitles to Heaven. The former does by no means constitute the latter; but is connected with it, as a Link in the same Chain; or included in it, as Part of the same Whole—that important and glorious Whole, JUSTIFICATION! Which, to every poor Sinner, who knows his undone Condition, must be incomparably more valuable, than ten thousand Worlds.

Ther. Admitting your Distinction to be proper; Is not the Death of *CHRIST*, sufficient of *itself* to obtain, both our full Pardon, and our final Happiness?

Ans. Since my Friend has started the Question, I may venture, with all Reverence to the divine Counsels, to answer in the Negative: it being necessary, that the REDEEMER of Men should *obey*, as well as *suffer*, in their Stead.—For this We have the Testimony of our Church; “It had not been enough to be delivered by his Death from Sin, except by his Resurrection We had been endowed with Righteousness.”—For this We have the Authority of our LORD; *This*

D 3 Command-

* Gal. v. 5.

† Rom. viii. 10.

Commandment, says He, *have I received of my FATHER, that I should lay down my Life* *. Thus it becometh Us, adds He in another Place, *to fulfil all Righteousness* †.—To all which his Apostle subjoins; that, if *We reign in Life*, it must be, not only through those Sufferings which expiate, but also through that *Righteousness* ‡ which merits.

Ther. Our LORD's Testimony relates only to a *positive* Institution, and is quite foreign to your Purpose.—I have often been disgusted at such strained Applications of Scripture. The Partizans of a System wrest the sacred Book. They deal with divine Truth, as the Tyrant *Procrustes* served those unhappy Creatures, who fell into his merciless Hands. Is a Text too short, to suit their Design? Our *Procrustean* Expositors can stretch it on the Rack, and lengthen its Sense. Is it too full, to consist with their Scheme? They can lop off a Limb, secrete a Sentence, or contract the Meaning.—Is this to reverence the great GOD? Is this to treat respectfully his holy Word?

Assp. I have been grieved, I assure You, and disgusted at this Practice, as well as Yourself. A Practice, not only very irreverent, but very injudicious also. It really prejudices the Cause, it it would unfairly recommend. Such a Support is like a *broken Tooth, or a Foot out of joint* ||; not only unserviceable, but hurtful; an Obstruction, rather than a Furtherance.—However, I am not conscious of committing any Violence on this Passage, or of forcing it into my Service. The Circumstance You object, rather strengthens, than

invalidates

* John x. 18.

† Matt. iii. 15.

‡ Rom. v. 17.

|| Prov. xxv. 19.

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invalidates the Conclusion. If it was so requisite for our blessed MEDIATOR, to observe a *positive* and temporary Institution; how much more necessary, to fulfil those *moral* Precepts, whose Obligation is unalterable and everlasting? At his Baptism, He observed the former; as a Token or Earnest, that through his whole Life, He would fulfil the latter *.

Besides; it should be considered, Whether *CHRIST*'s Sufferings were a complete Satisfaction to the Law? Complete they were, with regard to the *Penalty*, not with regard to the *Precept*. A Distinction obvious and weighty. From whence arises the following Argument; which, for *once*, You will allow me to propose in the logical Form.

By what alone the Law was not satisfied; by that alone Sinners could not be justified:

By *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, the Law was not satisfied:

Therefore, by *CHRIST*'s Sufferings alone, Sinners could not be justified.

But when We join the active with the passive Obedience of our LORD; when We add to both, the perfect Sanctity of his Nature; how does our Justification stand firm, in the *fullest* Sense of the Word! We have all that the Law demands, both for our Exemption from the Curse, and as a Title to the Blessing.

Ther. Does not the Scripture ascribe the Whole of our Salvation to the Death of *CHRIST*? Delivering it, as a never to be forgotten Maxim in

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* ΠΑΡΑΝ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗΝ, Omnes *Justitia* Partes, atque adeo hanc quoque, cæterarum majorum Arrhabonem.

Christianity; That *We have Redemption through his Blood* *: are brought near through the Blood of *CHRIST* †: nay, that *We are justified* (the very Point under Debate) through his Blood †.—Would the inspired Writer have assigned these various Blessings to this *one* Cause; if it had been a Price inadequate to the Purchase, or a Means insufficient to accomplish the End?

Asp. This Part of our LORD's meritorious Humiliation, is, by a very usual Figure, put for the *Whole*. The Death of *CHRIST* includes, not only his Sufferings, but his Obedience. The Shedding of his precious Blood, was at once the grand Instance of his Suffering, and the finishing Act of his Obedience. In this View it is considered, and thus it is interpreted, by his own Ambassador. Who, speaking of his Divine MASTER, says, *He was obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross* ||.

By the same Figure, Faith is sometimes said to be a lively influential Persuasion, *That CHRIST died for our Sins* §. At other Times, it is represented as a firm practical Belief, *That GOD hath raised Him from the Dead* ¶. Neither of which can, without the utmost Contrariety to the Analogy of Scripture, be taken in the *exclusive* Sense. Each Act must be understood, not separately, but jointly.

Each

* Eph. i. 7. † Eph. ii. 13. † Rom. v. 9.

|| *Phil.* ii. 8. The Original is *ἡ ὑποταγή ἡ αὐτοῦ ἕως θανάτου*. Not only *in* Death, but through his whole Life, *even unto* Death. That same Principle of Duty to GOD, which influenced our SAVIOUR's Life, carried Him on to the last and greatest Act of Obedience, his voluntary Submission to Death.

§ 1 Cor. xv. 3.

¶ Rom. x. 9.

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Each as implying both, or reciprocally inferring one another.

In like manner, when the Scripture ascribes our Justification to the Death of *CHRIST*; We are not to think, that it would *set aside*, but *imply* his Obedience. It is not because his active Obedience has no Concern, in procuring the Blessing; but because his bitter Passion was the most conspicuous, and the completing Stage of his ever-glorious Undertaking. Then, and not till then, He could truly say; *FATHER, I have finished the Work, Thou gavest me to do* *.

Ther. According to your Account then, it should be possible for a Man to have all his Sins pardoned, yet not attain to *complete* Justification. Which is as contrary to sound Sense, and true Divinity, as to imagine, that Crookedness may be removed, and the Object not become straight.

Asp. No, *Theron*. I only apprehend, that Pardon does by no Means exhaust the *whole* Nature of Justification. For which I have a better Warrant than my own Apprehension. *He was delivered, for our Sins, and rose again for our justification.* “O most comfortable Word, saith our Church, evermore to be borne in Remembrance! He died to put away Sin, *this is one Part of Justification*; He rose again to endow Us with Righteousness †.” *This is the other Part.*

According to my Account, it is impossible, that the active and passive Obedience of our REDEEMER should be disjoined. To whomsoever the one is imputed, from Him the other is not

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* John xvii. 4.

† For this, and the preceding Quotation, see *Our Homily on the Resurrection.*

with-held. They were *undivided in CHRIST* the illustrious Head; and they are undivided in their Application to his mystical Body. As *CHRIST* in suffering obeyed, and in obeying suffered; so, whoever receives *CHRIST* as an Atonement, receives Him also as a Righteousness.

This has been observed before; and if this be real Fact, what an *inestimably precious* Gift, is the Gift of *CHRIST*! Never was the most sovereign Remedy, so admirably suited to any Malady, as this is adapted to our necessitous and miserable State. In HIM may We be found, living and dying! How safe, how happy then!—Let me not weary your Patience, if I repeat a Passage from our excellent Dr. *Lightfoot*. Which, though artless and remarkably simple, has very much affected my Mind; and, I hope, will leave some valuable Impression on my Friend's. “Justification, says that “judicious Divine, is a Man's being interested “in all *CHRIST*'s Righteousness. And if any “Thing is to be longed for, sure that is, to be interested in *all CHRIST*'s Righteousness.”

Ther. You don't weary my Patience; neither do You satisfy my Doubts. For You take no notice of the *Absurdity* objected, and the Comparison which enforces it.

Asp. Your Comparison, my dear Friend, is not founded on a *parallel* Case. Neither Sense, nor Philosophy find a Medium, between the Removal of Crookedness, and the Succession of Straightness. But Reason discerns an *apparent*, and Revelation maintains an *important* Difference, between the Pardon of Sin, and a Title to Life. This has already been proved from Scripture; and is, to me at least, evi-

dent from the very Nature of Things. If a King, in favour of some condemned Malefactor, revoke the Sentence of Death; this is one very considerable Act of Clemency. But if He pleases to make the pardoned Criminal, a *Partaker* of his Kingdom, or an Heir of his Crown; this surely is a new, and a much higher Instance of royal Bounty.

Since You insist upon a *Similitude*, the Word of GOD, which always speaks with consummate Propriety, will furnish Us with one. *Zechariah* illustrates the Doctrine of Justification. He represents the Sinner by a Person arrayed in *filthy Garments*. His Pardon is described by *taking away* this sordid Apparel. By which Benefit, He ceases to be defiled; yet is He not hereby clothed; yet is He not hereby justified. This is an additional Blessing; signified by putting on *Change of Raiment* *, and wearing beautiful Robes.—Here, the Circumstances tally. The two constituent Parts of Justification, are severally displayed, and strongly marked. Here We have the Removal of Filth, and the Accession of Beauty; that which frees Us from being abhorred, and that which renders Us accepted. Which, though distinguishable in themselves, and distinguished by the sacred Writer, are always united in the divine Donation.

After all, I readily acknowledge, that the Clemency of an earthly Sovereign, the Proceedings of an earthly Tribunal, or the Generosity of an earthly Benefactor, are but partial and inadequate Representations of this wonderful Affair. Because, in the Case of justifying a Sinner, all is absolutely free,

* Zech. iii. 3, 4, 5.

free; yet all is strictly due: *absolutely free*, with respect to unworthy Man: *strictly due*, with regard to the Merits of **CHRIST**. —

Ther. Due to **CHRIST**—This Notion, I suppose, is founded upon a Covenant; a *chimerical* Covenant, that **CHRIST** would take upon Him the Obedience required from Man, of which there is not the least Intimation in holy Scripture.

Asp. That **CHRIST** undertook every Thing necessary, to redeem *lost Sinners* from Death and Hell; every Thing necessary, to procure for *attainted Rebels* a Title to Life and Glory; this cannot be reckoned chimerical. This must be as real, as that *lost Sinners* are redeemed, or *attainted Rebels* restored. Every Proof of the one, proves and establishes the other. This is what We call a *Covenant*; and, from its benign Nature, **THE COVENANT OF GRACE**.

Without *undertaking* this, I see not how our **LORD** could sustain the Character of a **SURETY**; nor, without *fulfilling* it, how He could execute the Office of a **REDEEMER**.—And I believe, You yourself will be at a loss to shew, with what Kind of Justice the Eternal **FATHER** could lay* our Iniquities on the innocent **JESUS**, unless He had *consented* to be answerable for our Guilt.

Ther. This is no Answer to my Objection. I said—and it has been asserted by a very eminent and able Pen—that there is no Intimation of any such Covenant in the whole Scriptures.

Asp. What then can be the Meaning of those remarkable Words, in the Prophecy of **Zeebariah**?

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* **Isai.** liii. 6.

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The Counsel of Peace shall be between them both *. Here, I think, the Covenant is mentioned, and the Parties are specified.—*The Counsel of Peace*, if I mistake

* Zech. vi. 12, 13. These two Verses contain a brief, but very fine Description of the REDEEMER; of his Person, his Office, and his Glory; together with the all-gracious Cause, and ever-blessed Fruit of our Redemption.

His *Person*: He is *the Man*; or, as the *Hebrew* imports, the *real*, but at the same Time, the *illustrious Man*.—*Whose Name is the BRANCH*; being the new Origin of a new Race; the Father of a spiritual Seed, who are Children, not of the Flesh, but of the Promise.—A Branch that shall spring, not from a common Root, not from any human Planting, but *from under Himself*; being born of a pure Virgin, and by the Power of his own SPIRIT, He shall be both Stock and Stem to Himself.

His *Office*: It is to *build the Temple*, the Church of the Elect; which is the House of the living GOD. In which He dwells, and by Whom He is worshipped. Laying the Foundation of this spiritual Edifice in his Cross, and cementing it with his Blood.—Which He shall rule as a *King*, after having redeemed it as a *Priest*; uniting the sacerdotal Center with the regal Diadem, and being a *Priest upon his Throne*. Hence proceeds his *Glory*: For, He *stands* not, like other Priests, offering daily the same Oblations; but having, by one Sacrifice, obtained eternal Redemption for Us, is *set down at the Right-hand of the MAJESTY on High*.

What is the *Cause* of these great Events? What, but that most sacred and august Convention, *the Council of Peace*? Which was settled *between them both*; between the LORD JEHOVAH on one Hand, and the Man whose Name is the *BRANCH* on the other.—Called a *Council*, from the entire Consent, which actuated each Party; and the transcendent Wisdom, displayed in the whole Scheme.—*The Council of Peace*, because of its sovereign Efficacy, to make Peace with an offended GOD, Peace in the accusing Conscience, Peace among People of jarring Tempers and discordant Principles.

take not, signifies the mysterious and unsearchable Contrivance, formed for the Recovery of ruined Man.—Formed and carried into Execution, by the LORD Almighty, or GOD the FATHER; and that illustrious Person, who is to *build the Temple, and bear the Glory.* A Character, which None can claim; a Task, to which None is equal; but the blessed JESUS only.

In *Psalms* the xlth, the *Conditions* of the Covenant are circumstantially recorded. Which were the Incarnation, Obedience, and Death of the eternal SON: *A Body hast Thou prepared me. Lo! I come to do thy Will; and to offer one Sacrifice for Sin* *.—The *Accomplishment* of these Conditions, is alledged and pleaded by our great MEDIATOR, in the Introduction to his last solemn Prayer †. What He implores, in the Process of his Supplications, may be looked upon as the *Recompence* ‡, decreed Him by the FATHER, and stipulated in this magnificent Treaty.—*Implores*, did I say? 'Tis very observable, that our LORD makes a *Demand*, rather than a *Request*. The Expression is not *ερωτω*, but *δελω* ||. A Word of Authority, not of Supplication. He claims what, by the FATHER's Engagement, and by his own Obedience, was become his unquestionable Right.

Here are the Parties of the Covenant; the Conditions of the Covenant; the Performance of the Covenant; and the Reward, which, by virtue of such

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* Heb. x. 5, 7, 12.

† John xvii.

‡ This *Recompence* is specified and promised, in another authentic Copy of the same grand Treaty, registered *Isai.* xlix. 1—6.

|| Not I *beg*, but I *will*. John xvii. 24. *Sic volo, sic jubeo.*

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Performance, is merited, is claimable, is due. All this, I should imagine, amounts to an *Intimation*, and somewhat *more* than an Intimation of the Covenant.

Ther. This You call the Covenant of Grace: But if We are justified by *CHRIST*'s fulfilling of the Law, We are justified by Works. So that, before You can strike out such a Way of Salvation, You must *contradict* Yourself: And, what is more adventurous, You must abolish that fundamental Principle of the Gospel; *By the Works of the Law, shall no Flesh be justified.*

Asp. We are, I grant it, justified by Works. But whose? The Works of *CHRIST*, not our own. — This is very far from contradicting Ourselves; equally far is it from abolishing, what You call a “Principle of the Gospel.” Which, though an undeniable Truth, is not an evangelical Doctrine. Because, it only shews Us our miserable State, and the utter Impossibility of relieving Ourselves. Whereas, nothing is *genuine Gospel* *, but what speaks Comfort, and administers Recovery.

Between the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, this, I apprehend, is the Difference. In the former, Man was to obtain eternal Life by his *personal* Obedience. By the latter, the Obedience of *his Surety* is accepted, instead of his own. The Righteousness required by both, is not *sincere*, but *complete*; not proportioned to the Abilities of fallen Man, but to the Purity of the Law, and the Majesty of the *LAWGIVER*. — By this Means, the

* The *Gospel*, precisely considered, and as it stands in Contradistinction to the *Law*, is the Doctrine of Pardon and Life through *JESUS CHRIST*; through his Satisfaction and Righteousness, freely presented to lost Sinners, and freely to be applied for their Salvation.

the Glory of GOD as an awful Sovereign, and the Glory of his Law as an inviolable System, are entirely preserved and illustriously displayed. The Salvation of Sinners, neither clashes with the Truth, nor interferes with the Justice of the Supreme LEGISLATOR. On the contrary, it becomes a faithful and just * Procedure of the most High GOD, to justify Him that believeth on JESUS.

Ther. When You make this Difference between the two Covenants, where is your Authority from Scripture? Which of the sacred Writers have taught Us, that, though one demanded personal, the other is content with vicarious Obedience?

Asp. Which?—*The first Three.* The most eminent Historian; the most enraptured Poet; and the most zealous Preacher. I need not inform You, that I mean *Moses, David, and Paul.*

The Testimony of *David* has already been recited. —*Moses* gives Us a concise, but very instructive Account of the second Covenant. With *Whom*, according to his Representation, was it made? Not with *Adam*, or any of his Posterity; but with the LORD JESUS CHRIST, in the Room and Stead of both. None of the Articles are proposed to a poor, impotent, ruined Creature. It is not a Law of Commandments, but a free Promise only, that must afford Relief in a fallen State. Therefore the whole Burden is consigned over to the interposing SAVIOUR, significantly described by the Seed of the Woman. It is not said, “Thy best Endeavours, O *Adam*, thy true Repentance and sincere Obedience, shall retrieve this fatal Miscarriage;” but, the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent’s Head.

* 1 John i. 9.

“*Head**. The SON of the MOST HIGH,
 “by taking thy Nature, submitting to thy Obli-
 “gations, and suffering Death for thy Sins, HE,
 “even HE shall fully repair thy Loss.”

CHRIST, We see, undertook to execute the
 Conditions. CHRIST was our Representative in
 this great Transaction. For which Reason He is
 styled by St. Paul, *The second Man* †, and *the Surety*
of a better Covenant †.—Our Help being laid upon
 ONE, that is so mighty; upon ONE, that is so
 faithful; the Covenant is said to be, *In all Things*
well ordered and sure ‖. Admirably well ordered in-
 deed, for the Comfort of the *Christian*, and the Se-
 curity of his Salvation.—“ ’Tis true, may He ar-
 “gue, I cannot fulfil the Conditions; and ’tis
 “equally true, that no such Thing is required at
 “my Hands. The LORD JESUS CHRIST,
 “of his adorably rich Goodness, has performed all
 “that was conditional §; and has established, for
 “me and for his People, a *valid Title* to the Pro-
 “mises ¶, the Privileges, and—

Ther.

* Gen. iii. 15. † 1 Cor. xv. 48. † Heb.
 vii. 22. ‖ 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

§ Witsius, instead of representing the *Covenant of Grace*
 as a *chimerical* Thing, most affectionately and charmingly
 displays its Excellency; *Si quicquam ergo attentissima Con-*
sideratione dignum censeri debeat, sane id Fœdus Gratiæ est.
Hic Via ostenditur ad meliorem terrestri Paradisum, & ad cer-
tiolem stabilioremque Fœlicitatem, eâ qua Adamus excidit.
Hic nova Spes perditis Mortalibus allucet, quæ eo gratior esse
debet, quo inexpectatior obvenit. Hic Conditiones offeruntur,
quibus æterna Salus annexa est; Conditiones non a Nobis rur-
sus præstandæ, quod Animum despondere faceret; sed ab EO,
qui Vitâ non excedet, antequam vere dixerit, Consumma-
tum est.

De Oecon. Lib. II. Cap. i.

¶ Therefore the Apostle uses this remarkable Expres-
 sion, *Covenants of Promise*, Eph. ii. 12.—*Covenants*, in

Ther. "has thereby released me from all Obligation to practical Duty." Farewel then to our own Obedience. No more Occasion for any Holiness of Life. Nay, the Sluice is opened for an Inundation of Ungodliness.—Fine Divinity truly! Should I not rather say? Downright Antinomianism!

App. No, my Friend: *CHRIST* came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil*. He has fulfilled it, to the uttermost, in his own Person. He has also merited for Us, those Supplies of the *SPIRIT*, which alone can enable weak corrupt Creatures, to yield acceptable Obedience.—Though our *LORD JESUS* died, and was obedient for the Ungodly; though He always finds Us ungodly; when He justifies Us; yet He never leaves his People in this abominable State. On the contrary; He teaches them, and by this very Grace of free Justification, to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts†.

Pray, let Us consider the Tenour of this Covenant; since You are so very apprehensive of its Consequences.—"I will put my Laws into their Minds, and on their Hearts will I write them†. They shall discern such a Beauty and Glory in my Precepts, as will engage their Desires, and win their Affections. So that it shall no longer be their Burden, but their Delight, even their

"Meat

the plural Number. Because, administered at sundry Times, and manifested in diverse Manners. Though the Substance of each was one and the same, namely *CHRIST*—Covenants, not of mutual Contract, but of absolute Grace; because the Blessings were not proposed on the Foot of obligatory Conditions, but by Way of free Grant, or unconditional Promise. *I will be their GOD; they shall be my People.* Jer. xxxi. 33.

* Matt. v. 17. † Tit. iii. 12. ‡ Heb. viii. 10.

“Meat and Drink, to do the Will of their FATHER in Heaven.”—This, You will own, is practical Duty, in its most perfect Form. And this is one Benefit of the Covenant; one of the Privileges, purchased by our great MEDIATOR. Now it seems wondrous strange, that the Purchase of an Estate for You or me, should be reckoned the sure Means, to *deprive* Us of the Possession, or *debar* Us from the Enjoyment.

How often is this weak Surmise urged as an Argument? All whose Plausibility is owing, to a palpable Mistake, or an egregious Fallacy: to a supposed Separation of Things, which are absolutely inseparable; I mean, our Justification and our Sanctification*.—You are a Philosopher, *Theon*. Try, if You can separate *Gravity* from the *Stone*, or *Heat* from the *Fire*. If these Bodies and their *essential* Properties, if these Causes and their *necessary* Effects, are indissolubly connected; so are a genuine Faith, and a conscientious Obedience. To suppose them disunited, is as contrary to sound Divinity; as it would be contrary to true Philosophy, if You should talk of a burning Substance that has no Warmth, or of a solid Substance that has no Weight.—Never therefore, my dear Friend, repeat this stale Objection; never propagate this

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* See *Isai. xlv. 24.* *1 Cor. i. 30.* *1 Cor. vi. 11.* Where these Blessings walk Hand in Hand, and never were, never will, never can be parted. No more, than the delicious Scents, can be separated from the beautiful Bloom, of the Rose or Carnation. Let the Flower be expanded, and the Fragrance transpires. Let Justification take Place, and, under a Sense of this delightful Privilege, the Heart is purified; the Life is rectified; the whole Man sanctified.

ungrounded * Clamour; nor adopt a Cavil, which is altogether as unphilosophical, as it is anti-evangelical.

Ther.

* This puts me in mind of what *Theodorus* replied to *Philocles*; who was often insinuating, that He preached *licentious Doctrine*; because He enlarged, with peculiar Assiduity, upon Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*; and frequently chose such Texts as, *Believe in the LORD JESUS, and Thou shalt be saved.*

"I preach Salvation by *JESUS CHRIST*; and give me Leave to ask, Whether You know, what Salvation by *CHRIST* means?"—*Philocles* paused. He began to blush; would have eluded the Question, and declined an Answer.—"No, said *Theodorus*: You must permit me to insist upon a Reply. Because, if it be a right one, it will justify me and my Conduct: if it be a wrong one, it will prove, that You blame You know not what; and have more Reason to inform yourself, than to censure others."

This disconcerted Him still more. Upon which *Theodorus* proceeded. "Salvation by *CHRIST* means, not only a Deliverance from the Guilt, but also from the Power of Sin; the latter effected by Means of the former. HE gave Himself for Us, that, having rescued Us from the Damnation of Hell, and restored Us to the Hope of Heaven, He might, by the Faith or believing Enjoyment of these Blessings, redeem Us from all Iniquity."—"Go now, *Philocles*, and tell the World, that by teaching these Doctrines, I promote the Cause of Licentiousness. And You will be just as rational, just as candid, just as true, as if You should affirm; That, when your House was in Flames, the Firemen, by playing the Engine, and pouring in Water, burnt the Building to the Ground, and laid your Furniture in Ashes."

The same may be said of those Writers; who, to depreciate the Truth as it is in *JESUS*, and to discredit the great Duty of a Sinner, and talk of "a presumptuous inactive Reliance on the Blood and Merits of *CHRIST*," which is mere Inconsistency. Made up of incompatible Ideas.—A pretended or hypocritical

Ther. We digress from the Point. My principal Objection is not satisfied. I was observing that, according to *your* Manner of stating the Affair, Salvation is no longer free, but founded upon Works.—They are the Works of the Law, though *CHRIST* performs them. To maintain, that We are justified by these Works, is to confound the Difference between the Law and the Gospel.

Asp. Though We should admit your Premises, We cannot acquiesce in your Conclusion. The same Righteousness, by which We are justified, is both legal and evangelical. *Legal*, in respect to *CHRIST*, who was made under the Law, that He might obey all its Commands. *Evangelical*, in respect to Us, who work not Ourselves, but believe in the great FULFILLER of all Righteousness.—This is much of the same Nature, with that other momentous Distinction in Divinity; Salvation is freely given, yet dearly bought. *Freely given*, with regard to Us; *dearly bought*, with regard to *CHRIST*. So, We are justified by Works, if You look forward to our SURETY: We are justified *without* Works, if You cast a retrospective View on Ourselves.

Theron was revolving these Points in his Mind. — *Aspasio*, after a short Interval, renewed the Discourse:—I know not, whether my Friend is yielding to my Arguments, or searching after Objections; deliberating upon a Capitulation, or mustering his Forces for a fresh Sally. However, let
 E 3 me
 Reliance there may be. But, whenever Reliance is *real*, it cannot be *presumptuous*, because it has GOD's Word for its Warrant; it will not be *inactive*, since it is a Connection with *CHRIST* the living Head.

me take this Opportunity of dropping a Hint, and suggesting a Caution.

The grand Reason, which inclines some People to reject this comfortable Doctrine, lies concealed, if not in an absolute Disbelief of our LORD's eternal Glory and GODHEAD, yet in unsettled Apprehensions of it, or an habitual Inattention to it.—If our SAVIOUR was not really GOD, as some Writers, unhappily mistaken themselves, endeavour to persuade the World; it would be a reasonable Practice, and entirely consistent with their Scheme, to disavow the Imputation of his Righteousness. Because, upon such a Supposition, his Obedience was no more than bounden Duty; in which there could not be the least Pretence to Merit, and which could be profitable to None but Himself.—Whereas, if We verily believe Him to be the incarnate GOD, his Submission to the Law becomes an Act of *voluntary* Humiliation. Which Circumstance, together with the *transcendent* Dignity of his Person, render his Obedience, not meritorious only, but inexpressibly and *infinitely* meritorious.

As the Blood of *CHRIST* is called *GOD's own Blood* *; so the Obedience of *CHRIST* was performed in the Person of that adorable MEDIATOR, *who is GOD over all* †. He acted through the whole Course of his Life, and suffered Death at the last, not merely as Man, but as GOD-Man; as JEHOVAH-JESUS; IMMANUEL.—Let me entreat You to remember, ever to remember this *all-important* Article of our Faith. And may the blessed SPIRIT of Wisdom give Us an Understanding, to know the

weighty,

* Acts xx. 28.

† Rom. ix. 5.

weighty, the extensive Influence of so glorious a Truth!

Ther. Far be it from me, to derogate from the Dignity of our SAVIOUR's Person, or to depreciate the Merits of his mediatorial Office. Place them as high, as Words can reach; exalt them as far, as Thought can soar; I stedfastly believe, You will still fall short, unmeasurably short, of their real Worth.—But this Consideration seems to increase the Absurdity of your Notion. For, if *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, *his very Righteousness* be imputed; then, the true Believers are altogether as righteous, as *CHRIST* himself. Whereas, if You maintain, that his Righteousness is imputed only *as to its Effects*, You will keep clear of this Rock.

Alp. This, I apprehend, will be like keeping clear of *Scylla*, only to fall foul upon *Charybdis*. It will drive Us upon a Method, which is insufficient, unnecessary, and apparently absurd.—*Insufficient.* For, in order to Justification, that must be imputed, which answers the Demands of the Law. Now nothing can do this, but the Righteousness, the very Righteousness of *CHRIST*. Who, by his perfect Obedience, *is the End of the Law for Righteousness*.—*Unnecessary.* What are the Effects of the REDEEMER's Righteousness? Pardon of Sin, and Justification of our Persons. When the Righteousness of *CHRIST* is imputed, We have Pardon. We have Justification. These therefore need not be imputed, because they are possessed; possessed, as the never-failing Effects of an Interest in the REDEEMER's Righteousness.—Sanctification is another Effect or Fruit of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness. But how strange would it be, to talk

of an imputed Love of GOD! Imputed Purification of Heart! Imputed Reformation of Life! Is not all this apparently *absurd*?

You are fixed in Thought, my Friend. That Brow, which is generally open and expanded, I see contracted almost into a Frown. Displeased, perhaps, with the morose and meagre Business of Argumentation.

There No, *Aspasio*. I am not displeased; but I must confess, your Arguments put my Attention a little upon the Stretch.

Asp. Well then; we will slacken the Cords, and relieve your Attention; by giving a familiar and comfortable View of this great Transaction. It is represented in Scripture, under the Form of a judicial Process. GOD Himself is the Judge; inconceivably holy to abhor, and inflexibly just to punish Sin. A Tribunal is erected, and inscribed with this Motto; *HE will judge the Secrets of Men, and will in no wise clear the Guilty*. The Persons summoned to appear, are Adam and his Children. The Accusers are, the Precepts of the Law, the Voice of Conscience, and the Tempter of the Brethren, Satan. All these advance and urge the Charge; the Charge of Guilt; horrid, aggravated, damnable Guilt. The Charge is proved; is evidenced by ten thousand thousand Facts; is absolutely undeniable. What can the Prisoner do? He has nothing to alledge in his own Defence. He is dumb with Conviction, and covered with Confusion. Now therefore He expects the Sentence of Condemnation, and the Execution of Vengeance. But at this Hour of Need, a Refuge is provided by Grace, rich and free beyond all Imagination. **JESUS CHRIST**

CHRIST the Righteous, becomes an Advocate for the Speechless guilty Wretch. **I M M A N U E L**, the Son of **G O D**, and Son of Man, pleads his Cause. "Deliver Him from Destruction. I am his Surety. I have made a full Atonement; I have brought in a complete Righteousness." This Plea, coming from a divine and infinite Person, is allowed to be valid. Coming from the Representative and Surety of the Sinner, is admitted on his Behalf. This is *Imputation*. Then follow the Effects of divine Imputation. A Sentence is pronounced in the Sinner's Favour; absolving Him from all Guilt; releasing Him from all Penalties; declaring Him approved of **G O D**; and entitled to Heaven. This is *Justification*. When the Holy **S P I R I T** convinces the Sinner, how much He stands in need of this Blessing; teaches Him to see clearly, that It is perfectly free for his Acceptance; and enables Him, by Faith unfeigned, to apply it unto Himself; then He is Partaker of the Gift, He is *justified*. Making continual Use of this unspeakable Benefit, He knows, that He is passed from Death unto Life; and by this Knowledge, He is renewed*, He is *sanctified*. This View will, I trust, both relax your Attention, and comfort your Heart.

Then I am obliged to You, *Aspasio*, for your Illustration. But still the Difficulty remains. To illustrate, is one Thing; to demonstrate, is another. The Light, which shews me the Colour of a Mountain, does not remove it from my Path. If **CHRIST**'s very Righteousness is imputed to Believers, it still appears to me, that Believers

* Col. iii. 10.

must be altogether as righteous as **CHRIST** himself.

Ans. Believers are Partakers of that very Righteousness, which renders **CHRIST** the Delight of his Almighty FATHER. They are interested in a spotless and everlasting Righteousness. Nay, they are made the Righteousness of GOD in **CHRIST**. — Notwithstanding these glorious Privileges, Believers are far from being altogether as righteous as **CHRIST** — unless You can suppose, that to be the Receiver, is in all Respects the same, as to be the Author and Finisher — unless, to have an imputed Righteousness, for our own particular Use, be altogether the same, as to have a mediatorial Righteousness, for the Justification of Others — unless, You esteem it one and the same Thing, to be made righteous Ourselves by a meritorious Surety, and to make Others, even innumerable Millions of Sinners righteous, from our own Stock of Merit. — These are Circumstances, which create a material, a marvelous Difference, between the Righteousness of **CHRIST** and his People. Which yield Room for a vast, for an unmeasurable Pre-eminence of his to theirs.

Ther. Admitting, that Believers cannot make Others righteous; yet, if **CHRIST**'s Obedience be accounted their Righteousness, they seem to have no more Need of pardoning Mercy, than **CHRIST** Himself.

Ans. Yes, because, before this Imputation, they were sunk in Guilt, and dead in Sins. Because, after it, they are defective in their Duty, and in many Things offend.

Ther.

Ther. Does not this Doctrine render the Intercession of our SAVIOUR superfluous? What Occasion have they for an Advocate with the FATHER, whose Righteousness has neither Blemish nor Imperfection?

Ass. They stand in need of an Advocate; first, that they may be brought Home to the REPAIRER of their Breaches*, and made Partakers of his Righteousness by a real Faith. Next, that their Faith may be preserved, notwithstanding all Opposition, steadfast and immoveable; or rather may be carried on, victorious and triumphant, even to the End.

Ther. You say, “CHRIST performed all that was conditional;” then He repented for Us, and believed for Us. This must be admitted in Pursuance of your Principles. But this is so wild a Notion, so contrary to Reason and Scripture, that to mention it, is to refute it.

— *Ass.* CHRIST performed whatever was required by the Covenant of Works, both before it was violated, and after it had been transgressed. But neither Repentance nor Faith were comprehended in this Institution. It knew nothing of the One, and it would not admit of the Other.—It was not therefore necessary, neither indeed was it possible, for our immaculate and Divine LORD, to repent of Sin, or believe in a SAVIOUR. But He did unspeakably more. He put away Sin by the Sacrifice of Himself†; He is Himself the SAVIOUR of all the Ends of the Earth; and He has Power to bestow that blessed SPIRIT, which worketh Faith, and produceth Repentance.

Ther.

* Isai. lviii. 12.

† Heb. ix. 26.

Ther. However, from what You have advanced, this will unavoidably follow; that a Man is to be justified, under the Character of a notorious Transgressor of the Law; and justified under the Character of a sinless Observer of the Law. And what is this, but a *glaring Inconsistency*?

Assp. This is not precisely the Thing, We mean. We maintain indeed, that a Man is justified, as a Transgressor; for *HE justifieth the Ungodly*. But being justified, He enters upon a new State; He acquires a new Character; He is no longer Darkness and Guilt, but Righteousness and Light in the LORD.—Neither is this inconsistent, but harmonious; if We take in the two *constituent Parts* of Justification, The Acquittance from Guilt, and a Title to Life. The former supposes Us to be Transgressors of the Law; and such the highest Saints in the World are. The latter requires Us to be Fulfillers of the Law; and such must the Inheritors of Heaven be.—Much less is this inconsistent, if We consider Believers, in their *personal* and *relative* Capacity; as they are in themselves, and as they are in their SURETY. Notorious or confessed Transgressors in Themselves, they have a sinless Obedience in *CHRIST*. The Consciousness of *that*, will be an everlasting Motive to Humility; the Belief of *this*, an inexhaustible Source of Joy.

All this is no more inconsistent, than the Union of a gloomy Contexture, and a lightsome Splendor, in those detached Clouds, which float amidst the Firmament. In themselves, they are a louring and dark Collection of Vapours; by the Impression of the

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the Sun-beams, they are fair and bright as the polished Silver.

Ther. After all, the Imputation taught in Scripture, is not the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, but of our *own Faith*. Agreeably to the Apostle's express Declaration, *Abraham believed GOD, and it was imputed to Him for Righteousness* *.

Ass. This Objection admits the Thing in Dispute, though it controverts the Way and Manner of obtaining it. Admits the Necessity of some *active, positive* Righteousness, in order to our Justification. In this Particular, I am glad to agree with my *Theron*; and in this Particular, I believe, the Generality of serious People agree with Us both.—Whenever their Consciences are awakened; whenever they seek to establish the Hope of eternal Life, they constantly turn their Eyes to *some* Righteousness. Which, they apprehend, may, either in Whole or in Part, answer the Demands of *JEHOVAH*'s Law. Some look to their own zealous Reformation and *sincere* Obedience. Others call in to their Succour Works of *Supererogation* in this World, and the Discipline of Purgatory in another. My Friend would assign this Office to his *Faith*.

Ther. Is this a proper Answer to my Objection, *Assasio*? The Text is point-blank against Your Tenet. You do wisely therefore, not to confront, but to elude the Evidence.

Ass. I did not intend it for an Answer; only as an *occasional* Observation. Which, nevertheless, has a pretty close Connection with the Subject.—Neither would I use so mean a Subterfuge, as to elude

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* Rom. iv. 3.

an Argument, which I could not confute. If my Friend had allowed me Leisure to explain myself, this should have been my Reply. *Y*

It is the very Nature of Faith, to renounce all Confidence in any Work, Duty, or Qualification of our own. It is the very Nature of Faith, to claim itself, and to find the Whole of our justifying Righteousness in *CHRIST* alone. "Not I," says Faith, but the infinite Merit of my *LORD*." This is most forcibly demonstrated, and no less zealously inculcated, in the Epistle to the *Philippians* *. There the Apostle interprets Himself, and settles the Subject of our present Enquiry. There He expressly declares that the Ground of his own Comfort, the Cause of his own Justification, was, not the Grace of Faith, but the Righteousness which is of *GOD* by Faith. Not the Act of Believing, but that grand and glorious Object of a Sinner's Belief, *The LORD our Righteousness*. And why should We not regard the Narrative of his Experience, as the very best Exposition of his Doctrine?

Besides; what was that Faith of *Abraham*, to which the Apostle refers? And which He proposes, as the invariable Model of our Justification?—It was Faith in the *promised Seed*; even in *JESUS CHRIST* the Righteous †. It was a firm Persuasion, that this illustrious *PERSON* should spring from his Loins; should be the Author of eternal Salvation to Himself, and to a Multitude of Believers, numberless as the Stars of Heaven.

Accordingly, it is affirmed by the Evangelist, That *Abraham* saw *CHRIST's* Day. He saw his

* Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9.

† Compare Gen. xv. 5, 6. with Gal. iii. 16.

meritorious Obedience; saw it with an Eye of Faith; and applying it to his own Soul, rejoiced. He rejoiced, You will observe, not in his own Faith, but in *CHRIST's* Day. An evident Proof, that his Justification was effected, not by the former, but by the latter.—Let Us then tread in the Steps of that holy Patriarch; and We shall ascribe little; We shall ascribe *nothing* to our Faith; but *all* to the infinitely excellent Righteousness of our REDEEMER.

Ther. Sure, *Aspasio*, You will not presume to correct Inspiration! The inspired Writer makes no mention of a REDEEMER's Righteousness. He says expressly and positively—*It*, that is, *Abraham's* Faith, and not any Thing else, was counted unto Him for Righteousness.

Asp. True, *Theron*; as those Windows are reckoned, are counted, *The Lights* of your House. And why? Because they, and not any Thing else, illuminate? No; but because they afford a Passage to the illuminating Rays. Through them, the first and best of Elements, is diffused into all your Habitation.—So *We* are saved by Grace through Faith; by Grace imputing, through Faith accepting, the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*. Grace is the magnificent Source of this nobler Light; Faith is the Means of transmitting it into all the Faculties of the Soul.

When our LORD declares to the diseased Woman, *Thy Faith hath made thee whole*; how are We to understand his Words? That the Patient's Belief, and not the Agency of *CHRIST*, wrought the Cure? To suppose this, would be extremely derogatory

gatory to the Power of our great PHYSICIAN. And if We ascribe Justification to the Act of Believing, this will be equally derogatory to the Obedience of our great MEDIATOR. In the *former* Case, *CHRIST* and his omnipotent Operation, were All in All. In the *latter* Case, *CHRIST* and his infinite Merit, are All in All. In *both* Cases, Faith is only the Eye to discern, or the Hand to receive, the sovereign Good.

Ther. I apprehend, the Apostle means, that *Abraham's* Faith, instead of his own perfect Obedience, was admitted as his justifying Righteousness, and became the Cause of his Acceptance with GOD.

Asp. This, I think, cannot be the Meaning. Because, Faith is very particularly *distinguished from* the Righteousness which is *by* Faith, which is *of* Faith *. These Forms of Expression, put an apparent Difference between the evangelical Faith, and the evangelical Righteousness. Since, whatever is *by* another, and *of* another, cannot, without the greatest Violence to Reason and Language, be reckoned that other.—If Faith itself was the Cause of our Acceptance with GOD, then We should

* *Rom. ix. 30. Phil. iii. 9.* The Apostles, I believe, never make use of this Phrase, *διὰ τῆς πίστεως*, or *διὰ τοῦ πιστεῖν*, but *ἐκ πίστεως* or *διὰ τῆς πίστεως*. Not *for*, or on *Account of* our Faith, but *by* or *through* Faith. Making this Grace, not the procuring Cause, but only the Instrument of applying, what is procured by Another.—Such Language as the former, seems contrary to the second Words of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. Yet, if *Theron's* Sense of the Text under Debate were admitted, the Doctrine contained in this unscriptural and offensive Style, is the unavoidable Consequence.

should be justified, each by something of his own*. Whereas, it stands upon Record in the Scriptures; it is an adjudged Point in the Court of Heaven; that *By ONE Man's Obedience Many shall be made righteous* †.—If Faith itself was the Cause of our Acceptance with GOD, then We should be justified by a Righteousness, which is confessedly *imperfect*. For, who has ever attained to the highest Degree of this Virtue? Or whose Faith is not mixed with an Alloy of Unbelief?—In short, if Faith itself was the Matter of our Justification, I see not how Boasting could be *excluded*; how the Law could be *magnified*; or what Reason the Apostle could have, to account all Things, but the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, meaner than Dross ‡.

Say not, that We presume to correct Inspiration. We only interpret the inspired Word in an harmonious *Consistency* with itself. This Sense is agreeable to the prevailing Doctrine; and to the current Language of Scripture.—To the *prevailing Doctrine*; which is A BELIEVING IN HIM, WHO JUSTIFIETH THE UNGODLY. Sift and examine this Expression; *Him* who justifieth. You will find, that the Work is *CHRIST's*; *CHRIST's* and no *Other's*. The HOLY GHOST assigns not the least Share, not so much as a Co-efficiency,

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to

* Faith, as an Act or Duty, is properly our own, and as such it is represented in Scripture. O Woman, great is *thy* Faith, *Matt. xv. 28.* *JESUS* seeing *their* Faith, *Matt. ix. 2.* After I heard of your Faith, *Eph. i. 15.* † Rom. v. 19.

‡ *Phil. iii. 8.* The Original is *Carbada*—A Word of the most contemptible Meaning; it signifies the *worthless* Scraps, and *sordid* Offals, which are cast to the Dogs. The Reader may see this Passage more fully explained in *Letter V.*

to any other imaginable Cause. With therefore, if it presumes to arrogate this exalted Privilege, or if it pretends to the least Part in this important Business, is a sacrilegious Usurper. To the contrary Language; as when David prays, *Purge me with Hyssop*, and *I shall be clean*; as when GOD is called our Fear, our Hope, our Joy, &c. In these Places, the Instrument is put for the Agent, the Act for the Object. So, in the Passage before Us, the Act of Faith is put for the Object of Faith. It must be understood, not absolutely, but as some Divines speak, objectively, instrumentally, relatively.

Ther. In the Name of Wonder, what can You mean by this Heap of harsh and obscure Expressions! Let me entreat You, *Astasio*, to speak in your own Style, not in the grim Dialect of *Aquinas*. I have an irreconcilable Aversion to these scholastic Terms. They are the *Barbarisms* of Divinity, and know but one Use, they are fitted to serve, that is, to perplex and puzzle a Cause. You cannot maintain. Somewhat like the Liquor, which a certain Fish, when closely pursued, is said to emit; by which the Water is darkened, and the Foe eluded.

Psal. li. 7. *Purge me with Hyssop*; that is, with the Blood of Atonement, sprinkled by the Branch of Hyssop. — This is one of the most puny and despicable Plants. It is placed, by *Salomon*, in the very lowest Class of Vegetables. Might not the HOLY GHOST intend to denote, by this typical Image, the beggarly and insignificant Nature of Faith, considered in itself? Which becomes respectable and efficacious, only by what it borrows; only by what it receives. *Seg.* *Kings* iv. 33. *Heb.* ix. 19.

† *Gen.* xxxi. 42, 53. † *Psal.* lxi. 5. *Jer.* xiv. 8. † *Psal.* xliii. 4.

App. This, *Theron*, is the Meaning of our uncouth Phrases: It is not Faith itself, which justifies; but that Righteousness, which Faith continually views; which Faith delightfully apprehends; and on which it finally terminates.

To be plainer still—We are justified by Faith, in the same Manner, as We are fed by the Hand, or nourished by the Mouth. Neither the Hand nor the Mouth are the Cause of our Sustenance, but Instruments only, that of conveying it, this of receiving it.—If an Apostle affirms, *We are justified by Faith*: Faith itself declares, *In the LORD I have Righteousness*. Put these Passages together, and You will have the true Sense of our Doctrine, and the true Doctrine of the Gospel.

When *Themistocles* fled from the Persecution of his own Countrymen, what recommended Him to the Protection of King *Admetus*?—Not his Name; that was obnoxious—Not his Actions; they had been hostile—But the Person of the young Prince; whom the distressed Refugee caught up in his Arms;

Though I am entirely of *Theron's* Mind, and can by no means admire our scholastic Divines, or their logical Terms; yet a Remark from *Paræus*, couched in this Style, is so pertinent to the Purpose, and so full an Explanation of the Point, that it would be an Injury to the Cause, not to make it a Part of my Notes. And some Readers, I apprehend, not much acquainted with this old-fashioned hoary Dialect, may be well enough pleased to view a Specimen: and like it, as they do the *Ruf* of a Medal, merely for its Uncouthness and Antiquity.

Faith justifies, says my Author, not *effectively*, as working an habitual Righteousness in Us; not *materially*, as though it were itself the constituent Cause of our Justification; but it justifieth *objectively*, as it apprehendeth *CHRIST*; and *instrumentally*, as it applieth his Righteousness.

Arms; and, charged with these Credentials, presented Himself to the royal Parent *.—So, Faith recommends to GOD, and justifies the Soul, not for itself, or its own Worth; but on Account of what it *embraces*, what it *presents*, and what it *pleads*.

Ther. Is not this a fanciful Distinction †, and an excessive Refinement? Has it any Foundation in Scripture?

Asp. It is implied in almost all the Representations of *CHRIST*, and all the Descriptions of Faith, which occur in the sacred Writings.

CHRIST is likened to *Clothing*; and Believers are said to *have put on CHRIST* ‡. Now, it cannot be the Act of putting on, that covers our Bodies; or keeps them warm; but the commodious Garment, which is wore.—He is compared to *Bread*: *I am the Bread of Life* ||. Shall we say? It is the Act of Eating, which strengthens the Constitution, and recruits our Spirits. No surely; but the Food eaten and digested.—*CHRIST* was typified by the *City of Refuge* §; and Sinners, by the obnoxious Man-slayer.

* This, says *Plutarch*, was a Custom peculiar to that Country; was reckoned the most solemn Method of supplicating Favour; and *seldom* met with a Repulse.—To which I may add, It is a Custom which *Christians* should imitate, in all their Addresses to the GOD and FATHER of our LORD *JESUS CHRIST*. When thus used, thus improved, it will *never* fail of Success.

† *Dr. Gill* thought it no fanciful Distinction, when He so judiciously observed; Faith is an *Act* or Duty of the Soul, but does not justify as such. It is a *Grate* of the *SPIRIT*, but does not justify as such. But We are justified by Faith, as it *looks* to, *apprehends*, and *embraces* *CHRIST*'s Righteousness for our Justification.

‡ Gal. iii. 27.

|| John vi. 35.

§ Numb.

slayer, ² Who, if He fled to one of those privileged Abodes, and there remained, was safe. No Prosecution against Him could be valid: He had nothing to fear from the Avenger of Blood. In this Case, was it the bare Act of Flying, which screened the Criminal? By no means: this conveyed Him to a Place of Security. But the *Place itself* was his Sanctuary, his Asylum, his Safeguard.

Faith is styled, *A receiving of CHRIST**: *As many as received Him, to them gave He Power*, to them He granted the Privilege, and the high Prerogative, *to become the Sons of GOD*. The Office of Faith is, according to this Definition, not to contribute its Quota, much less to deposit the whole Sum; but to take and use the inestimable Gift.— Faith is called, *A Looking unto JESUS* †; in Allusion, I suppose, to the famous Expedient, provided for the wounded Israelites ‡. Our crucified LORD was prefigured, by the brazen Serpent; our Guilt, by the Stings of the fiery Serpents; and our Faith, by looking to the miraculous Remedy. Did the healing Power, I would ask, reside in the mere Act of viewing? No: but in the Emblem of.

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* *Joh. i. 12.* See also *Rom. v. 17.* Where a Critic of accurate Judgment, and delicate Taste (though little known in England) makes this Remark on the Word *recipere*: *Non justificat Actus sumendi, quatenus est Actus; sed illud quod sumitur, aut apprehenditur.* BENGELIUS in loc. — His Annotations on the New Testament are comprised in a small Quarto Volume. They present the Reader with many refined Observations, on the Elegancies of the Style, and Sublimity of the Doctrines. They are a Pattern of the *concise* Manner; they gratify our Appetites, yet keep Us hungry and craving; and, which is the crowning Excellency, they all along indicate a Heart warm and glowing with the Love of its Subject.

† Heb. xii. 2.

‡ Numb. xxi. 8.

a dying SAVIOUR, elevated on the Pole, and ordained for the Recovery of the People. Here all the Efficacy was lodged. From hence it was all derived. The Action of the Eye, like the Office of Faith, was only to fetch home, and apply the sanative Virtue.

Ther. Suppose all You advance, to be true; and all You maintain, to be solid; what is the Advantage of such a Distinction?

Ans. Much. It preserves, unshared and inviolate, the Honour of GOD our SAVIOUR. It establishes, on an immovable Foundation, the Hope and the Comfort of a Christian. An Instance, which lately occurred, will explain my Meaning. A certain Writer, treating of that tremendous Day, when GOD will arise to administer eternal Judgment; when He will come to be avenged of his unfaithful Servants, and to destroy his avowed Enemies; exhorts Us All to labour after a living Faith—"which alone, says He, can carry Us safe to the Harbour, amidst the universal Deluge of Woe, which is going to overflow the Earth."

This Exhortation, You see, ascribes every Thing to an Act of our own; to Man's Faith, not to the REDEEMER's Righteousness. This, therefore, must greatly dishonour the all-sufficient REDEEMER, and his infinite Merit. As this Act of our own is confessedly imperfect and changeable, it affords but a crazy Bottom, on which to embark our everlasting Interests. A Consideration, which must damp our Joy, and often fill Us with uneasy Suspicions.—Whereas, let CHRIST be the Vessel of Preservation and Conveyance; let Faith sig-

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nify our Entering upon it, and our Continuing in it; then all is regular, and all is secure. Salvation is of the LORD. CHRIST has the Honour and Glory. While We have an Ark, which no Waves can overwhelm, no Rocks can shatter.

Once more, therefore, let me observe, in Pursuance of this important Remark; That Faith is represented as *laying hold on GOD our SAVIOUR* *; *leaning upon our BELOVED* †; *cleaving to the LORD* ‡.—Please to take notice of yonder Vine. Its Shoots are weak, and its Branches flimsy. Being absolutely unable to support themselves, they are furnished with a very remarkable Set of *Claspers*. Which, like so many Fingers, lay hold on the Pegs of the Wall, or fasten themselves to the Poles within their Reach. Without such a Provision, the Boughs must lie prostrate on the Ground, and be exposed to the Insults of every Foot. Whereas, by this kind Contrivance of Nature, so *creeping* a Plant, will climb into the Air, and enjoy the Breeze; so *feeble* a Plant, will stand out the Winter, and defy the Storms.—An instructive Admonition to Sinners! And no contemptible Illustration of Faith, especially in its principal and most distinguishing Employ! Thus let Us apprehend the blessed JESUS; hold Us fast by our adored REDEEMER; cleave to his ineffable Worthiness, as those twining Tendrils, by repeated Circumvolutions, adhere to their substantial Supporters. Then shall We rise, by Merits *not our own*, from the most abject and miserable Condition, to a State of everlasting Honour and Joy.

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Then

* Isai. xxvii. 5. † Cant. viii. 5. ‡ Acts xi. 23.

Ther. Some People, I believe, would hardly forbear smiling at the Peculiarity of your Diction; and might be inclined to call your Discourse *Adorning*, rather than *Reasoning*. For my own Part, I must acknowledge, that, as all your peculiar Phrases are derived from the Scriptures, I hear them with Reverence, and without the least Disposition to sneer. Was my Friend delivering a *Latin* Oration, it would be a sufficient Warrant for any of his Expressions, to prove that they came from the *Ciceronian* Mint. And will it not be an equally sufficient Authority, for any Modes of Speech used in a theological Essay, to alledge that they bear the Stamp of the *Bible*?
Asp. Thanks to my Friend — replied *Aspasio*, making a low Bow — Thanks for his indulgent Concession. Yet let Him know, that He has manifested his Judgment, as much as He has exercised his Candour. The Scripture is the Rule, not only of our Faith, but of our Language also, whenever We would explain that sacred Subject. — Can any Expressions be more proper or more emphatical, than those which unerring Wisdom has selected for our Use? Impossible! Therefore We are commanded to *hold fast a Form of sound Words**, as well as a System of sound Principles. — Can any Phrases express divine Things, with greater Precision and Perspicuity, than those which the divine SPIRIT has employed for this Purpose? Arrogance itself dares not entertain the Thought. Therefore We think it unexceptionably right, to declare the Truths of the Gospel, *not in the Words which Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the HOLY GHOST teacheth*†.

Ther.

Ther. Though I make no Objection to your Language, I have yet another Scruple with regard to your Doctrine.—Do the *antient Fathers* adopt or inculcate this imputed Righteousness? If it was so important an Article of our Faith, surely it could not be unknown in those early Ages, which were so near the apostolical Fountain. It would not have been omitted by those zealous Preachers, who chose to endure all the Rigours of Persecution, rather than renounce their holy Profession.

Assl. I think, it were sufficient to answer this Question, by asking another—Do the Apostles, does the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD speaking in Scripture, inculcate this Doctrine, or display this Privilege? If so, We need not be very solicitous for any farther Authority. *To the Law, and to the Testimony **, is our grand, our final Appeal. Amidst all the Darknes and Uncertainty, which evidently run through the Writings of the best of Men, this is our unspeakable Happiness, That *We have a more sure Word of Prophecy; to which We do well to take heed †.*

However; to be a little more particular—It cannot be expected, that We should find many Passages in those pious Authors, very strong and very explicit, upon the Point. Because, in their Days, it was not so professedly opposed; and therefore could not be so exactly discussed, as in later Ages. Nevertheless, they have left enough behind them, to avouch the Substance of what We assert; *That a Man is not justified by any Works, Duties, or Righteousness of his own, but only by Faith in JESUS CHRIST.*—I cannot say, that I have charged my Memory with their

* *Isai.* viii. 20.

† *2 Pet.* i. 19.

their very Words; and for that Reason, must not attempt at present to make any Citation. But, when a proper Opportunity offers, and their Works are before me, I may possibly produce a few of their Testimonies.

In the mean Time, I can mention a Set of Writers, whose Attestation will, I imagine, carry as much Weight with my Friend, as the united Voice of the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers.

Ther. Who are they?

Ans. Our venerable Reformers. The Homilies composed by those excellent Divines, are as express to my Purpose, as they are unexceptionable in their Evidence. This is their Language—"The true
"Understanding of this Doctrine, *We be justified*
"freely by Faith without Works, is not, that this
"our Act to believe, or this our Faith in *CHRIST*,
"doth justify Us: for that were to count Our-
"selves to be justified by some Act or Virtue, that
"is within Ourselves. But the true Meaning
"thereof, is, That although We hear *GOD's*
"Word, and believe it; although We have Hope
"and Faith, Charity and Repentance, and do
"never so many good Works: Yet We must re-
"nounce the Merit of all our Virtues and good
"Deeds, as Things that be far too weak and in-
"sufficient, to deserve Remission of Sin, and our
"Justification. We must trust only in *GOD's*
"Mercy, and that Sacrifice which our High-
"Priest and Saviour *JESUS CHRIST*, the
"SON of *GOD*, offered for Us upon the
"Cross."

The Homily subjoins a very apposite Illustration; which may conclude our Discourse with perfect Pro-

priety.

piety, and I hope with equal Efficacy. So that
 “as St. John Baptist, although He were never so
 “virtuous and godly a Man, yet in the Matter of
 “forgiving Sin, He did put the People from Him,
 “and appoint them unto *CHRIST*; saying thus
 “unto them, Behold! Yonder is the *LAMB* of
 “*GOD*, which taketh away the Sins of the World:
 “Even so, as great and as godly a Virtue as the
 “lively Faith is, yet it parteth Us from itself, and
 “remitteth Us unto *CHRIST*, for to have only
 “by Him Remission of Sins or Justification. So
 “that our Faith in *CHRIST*, as it were, saith
 “unto Us thus, It is not I that take away your
 “Sins, but it is *CHRIST* only; and to Him
 “only I send You for that Purpose, forsaking
 “therein all your good Words, Thoughts, and
 “Works, and only putting your Trust in
 “*CHRIST*.”

Ther. If there be any tolerable Sense of the No-
 tion under Debate, I think it must be understood
 as follows.—*CHRIST*’s Performance of the Law
 of his Mediation, or, in other Words, his unfin-
 ning Obedience to the moral Law, and the spotless
 Sacrifice of Himself to the vindictive Justice of
GOD; these are the only valuable Consideration,
 on Account of which, the gracious *GOD* restores
 guilty Creatures to a State of Acceptance with his
 Divine *M A J E S T Y*.

Ass. If this is what You mean by the *Law* of
Mediation, I am far from denying your Proposition.
 I would never desire to wrangle; but, if possible,
 to acquiesce. I would not wish to spy Faults, but
 rather

See the second Part of the Homily on Salvation.

rather to find Propriety, in my *Theron's* Sentiments. May his Faith, which is *thus far* advanced, be carried on by Grace, till it is completed in Glory!—That unflinching Obedience, and that spotless Sacrifice, are indeed the only valuable; they are also the *truly*, or rather the *infinitely* valuable Consideration. The Obedience being performed in *our Name*, and the Sacrifice offered in *our Stead*, have fully merited for Us the Remission of Sins, and the Enjoyment of Life: and all this, not only from the gracious, but even from the *just*, the faithful, the righteous GOD.

But then, they must be *imputed*, in order to furnish Us with a Claim, and invest Us with a Right, to the purchased Privileges.—Suppose them not imputed; and what becomes, of our *Interest* in them? They are like a Medicine prepared, but not applied.—Suppose them imputed; and they lay a firm, an apparent, a rational *Foundation*, for every pleasing Hope; and for every heavenly Blessing.

Ther. I fear, I have acknowledged too much.—My Thoughts fluctuate. My Mind is unsettled.—I would not withstand the Truth. I would not disbelieve any Doctrine of the Gospel. Yet—what shall I say? While I listen to your Reasoning, I am half a Convert. When I recollect the Objections, I revert to my first Opinion.

Of this, however, I am convinced, That human Righteousness is *insufficient* for our Justification. Here your Arguments have carried their Point. I shall henceforth place my Hopes of everlasting Happiness, not upon any Works of my own, but upon the free Goodness, and unbounded Beneficence, of the Supreme BEING. Pursuant to that

Maxim

Maxim of Scripture, *The Gift of GOD is eternal Life.*

Ass. You do well, *Theron*, to expect eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, not as the Wages of your own Obedience. But be pleased to remember, that all the Gifts of Grace, though perfectly free to Sinners, are founded upon a grand and inestimable Price, paid by their SAVIOUR. — Are they entirely absolved from Guilt? It is because CHRIST gave his Life for their Ransom. — Are they heard with Acceptance when they pray? It is because their exalted HIGH-PRIEST intercedes in their Behalf. — Are they completely justified, and inflated in endless Bliss? It is because their REDEEMER's consummate Righteousness, is the glorious Equivalent for this and every other Blessing *. — Therefore, when You mention eternal Life as the Gift of GOD, You should not forget to add with the Holy Apostle, *through JESUS CHRIST our LORD* †.

Well, my *Theron*; what say You farther? Is your Quiver emptied? Are your Scruples satisfied? May I interpret this Silence, as an Act of Assent?

Ther. Observe, how the *Ranunculuses*, on yonder gay Parterre, have contracted their full-blown Tufts; and the *Tulips*, now the Dews are descending, have closed their expanded Cups. — Such is the

* I should fear, says a pious Writer, to look at that great GOD and SAVIOUR, who has suffered so much for my Soul, did I not allow his Atonement to be of infinite Value, and an Equivalent to any Demands from the FATHER.

† Rom. vi. 20.

the State of my Thoughts. They are all bent inwards; collected in themselves; and *pondering* upon your Discourse. Which has inclined me, before I was aware, to contemplate, rather than talk. You will excuse my Thoughtfulness, *Assaph*. Or, if it wants an Apology, You must blame Yourself. For, had your Reasons been less cogent, my Attention had been more disengaged.

Assaph. My dear *Theron*, I shall only wish, in Allusion to your own Simile, and in the Language of the best of Books; That these Truths may *distil as the Dew* upon your Mind, and *lie all Night upon your Branches*. This, I am persuaded, is the only Way to have all your Comforts *green before the Sun*, and all your Virtues *flourish as an Herb*. Whereas, under the Influence of any other Faith, I am afraid, they will be as the Garden, that is visited with a Drought; or as the Leaves, that are smitten with a Blast.

Theron. I shall attentively consider, both your Doctrine, and your Arguments. Which that I may execute, with more Ease, and to better Purpose, be pleased to *sum up*, in a few Words, the Substance of what has passed. — This done, it will be Time to withdraw. The Flowers, You see, are our Monitors. They have folded up their Robes, and veiled their Beauties. A Custom which they seldom use, till the *rising Damps* render it unsafe, for their Master to be among them; and the *surrounding Gloom* renders it difficult, for His Eye to distinguish them.

Assaph. You could not oblige me more, than by giving me such a Command. — We trust for Salvation, which, Not

* Deut. xxxii. 2. † Job xxix. 19.

Not on our own *Internal Duties*. This were to build our House upon the Sand. Which, when the Rains descend, when the Floods rise, when the Winds blow with tempestuous Violence, will certainly fall; and bury the Builder, with all his vain Hopes, in irretrievable Ruin.

Not on the *Sincerity* of our *Hopes*. This, if opposed to *CHRIST*, and made the Rival of his Merits, will be a "despised broken Idol." Despised, by the infinitely sublime and majestic RULER of the World. Broken, with regard to the Stress We lay, or the Confidence We repose, on so deceitful a Prop. No more able to stand in the Judgment of the Great Day, than *Dagon* was able to maintain his Station, before the Ark of the LORD GOD of Hosts.

Not upon our *Faith*. This is often weak, as the rickety Child: sometimes quite faint, like a Person in a deep Swoon: always imperfect, like every other Performance of ours. Alas! To what afflicting Fears, to what grievous Despondency, should I be perpetually liable, if my own Faith was the Ground of my Justification. Blessed be the FATHER of Mercies! We have a surer Support. Not upon Faith, but upon its gracious AUTHOR, and glorious OBJECT, is the Hope of *Israel* founded. Yet

Not upon our LORD's Righteousness, considered only as passive; but upon his active and passive Obedience united. All that He *did*, in Conformity to the Commands of the Law; and all that He *suffered*, in Submission to its Penalty. Both which, immensely dignified by his divine Nature, are

are a Basis for our Faith, which nothing can shake;
 are a Foundation for our Assurance, which can never
 be removed.—Nothing else, in any Creature, or
 in all Worlds, could expiate the *least Sin*. This,
 not only expiates all Sin, but gives a Title, to
every Blessing—to the Blessings of Grace, and of
 Glory—of evangelical Holiness, and everlasting
 Happiness.



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DIALOGUE XI.

ASPASIO.

IHAVE often purposed, and as often forgot, to ask my *Theron*—What *Picture* He was so attentively surveying, when I stole unperceived upon Him, in this favourite Arbour *.

Ther. I was indulging a pensive Pleasure, in viewing the Ruins, and contemplating the Fate of *Babylon*—that renowned and opulent City! Once the Residence of the *Assyrian* Monarchs, and Capital of one of the greatest Empires in the World. The Draught I held in my Hand, represented some of its Remains. And indeed this was the very last Subject, which employed my Thoughts. In the Morning, my Son brought me his Observations upon the Scene; which I have just now been revising.

For, I frequently set Him, to exercise his Judgment, or display his Fancy, on remarkable Passages, which occur in History.—He was lately commissioned to determine a Controversy, between the illustrious

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Leonidas,

* See Dialogue V.

Leonidas, and the less celebrated *Pædaretus*. This was the Point in Debate: Which of them discovered the *truest* Generosity of Spirit, and the *most heroic* Love of their Country? The former, who exposed his Life, nay, devoted Himself to Death, in its Defence? Or the latter, who, when He was Candidate for a Seat among the Three Hundred, and lost his Election; instead of being chagrined or dissatisfied, went home unfeignedly rejoicing, “That
“there were found in *Sparta* three hundred Men,
“more worthy than Himself?”—The Task of this Day was, To give a *descriptive Picture* of those wonderful Ruins.

Asp. Pray, let me have the Pleasure of hearing the young Gentleman’s Performance.

Ther. It will be too long, and too puerile: tire your Patience, and offend your Taste.

Asp. I don’t use to make either of these Complaints, when I am entertained with *Theron’s* Compositions. And, as the Son has so much of his Father’s Genius, I am not at all apprehensive of any such Disappointment.—We have a most agreeable Situation, and more than an Hour’s Leisure. I must therefore repeat my Request.

Ther. ’Tis true, I have retouched the Sketch: which may render it somewhat more tolerable. And since You persist in your Demand, I will read the Paper.—Only desiring some Allowance for a little *Luxuriancy* of Imagination. Which, in young Writers it may be advisable to indulge, rather than repress *. As Age and Judgment will, probably,

come

* This Opinion is authorized by that penetrating and correct Critic, *QUINTILIAN*. *Audeat hæc Ætas plura,*
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come with the Pruning-knife, and make the proper Retrenchments.—I must farther observe, that, contrary to the Custom which prevails in our Schools, I generally choose to have Him express his Sentiments in *English*. Because, it is in *this* Language, He must communicate his own, and become acquainted with the Ideas of his Neighbours. Because, to acquire some good Degree of Propriety and Fluency in this his native Tongue, will be incomparably more serviceable, than to speak *Latin* with the *Terentian* Elegance, or to write it with the *Ciceronian* Copiousness.

Is this *Babylon*? The Glory of Kingdoms! The Beauty of the *Chaldean* Excellency!

*Where once the gorgeous East, with richest Hand,
Shower'd on her Kings barbaric Pearl and Gold.*

How is She fallen! Fallen from the Height of Magnificence, into the Abyss of Confusion! What was once the Object of universal Admiration, is now become a Spectacle of Astonishment and Horror.

The *Palace*, where Majesty sat enthroned like some terrestrial Deity, is a Heap of Rubbish: no longer distinguished by an Air of superior Elegance, but by stronger and more melancholy Marks of departed

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*Et inveniat, Et inventis gaudeat, sint licet illa non satis sicca
Et severa. Facile Remedium est Uberratis, sterilia melle La-
bore vincuntur. Illa mihi in Pueris Natura nimium Spei da-
bit, in qua Ingenium Judicio præsimitur. Materiam esse pri-
mum volo abundantiore, atque ultra quam oportet fusam.
Multum inde decoquent Anni, multum Ratio limabit aliquid
velut Ufu ipso deteretur.*

Lib. II. Inst.

parted Dignity *.—Where, the Nobles of that sumptuous Court, trailed along the marble Pavements their Robes of Purple and Embroidery; there, the crested Snake hisses, or the fierce envenomed Adder glides.

How disgraced is the *Room of State*; and what Contempt, deserved Contempt, is poured upon the *Banqueting-house*! In the first, the haughty Monarch, “who said in his Heart, *I am, and none else besides me* †,” gave Audience to cringing Sy-cophants and adoring Vassals. In the last, Hospitality, forgetting her generous Character, acted as an infamous Procureress for Debauchery; and Luxury and Lewdness almost brutalized a People, profusely given to Pleasures ‡. Now, Thorns over-run the Circumference, and “Desolation sits in the Threshold of them both.”—Where are the Roofs of Ivory, painted with *Vermillion*, and adorned with Sculpture?

* Benjamin, a Jew of Tudela, in his *Itinerary*, written about the Year of our LORD 1170, tells Us—“That He was upon the Place, where this City formerly stood, and found it wholly desolated and destroyed. Only some Ruins of *Nebuchadnezzar’s* Palace were still remaining; but Men were afraid to go near them, by reason of the many Serpents and Scorpions, that were then in the Place.”

† *Isai. xlvii. 10.*

‡ Given to Pleasures—This is *Isaiab’s* Character of the *Babylonians*, Chap. xlvii. 8. On which Passage, nothing can afford a clearer Comment, than the Account which *Quintus Curtius* gives of their unbounded Voluptuousness. *Babylonii maxime in Vinum, & quæ Ebrietatem sequuntur, effusi sunt. Nihil Urbis ejus corruptius Moribus, nihil ad irritandas illiciendasque immodicas Voluptates instructius.* Lib. V. Whoever reads what follows, in that elegant and modest Historian, will not think *Eugenio’s* Expression (*brutalized*) too severe for such horribly corrupt Manners.

Sculpture? The radiant Roofs, whose Lamps of burnished Silver, pendent in many a blazing Row, yielded Light as from another Sky? Swept from their Foundations, they lie clotted with defiling Dirt, or clasped with tangling Briars.—*Music* no longer pours her Harmony, through the spacious and pompous Apartment; but the Night-Owl, nestling in some Cleft of the Ruins, screams her harsh and portentous Dissonance. Joy no longer leads up the sprightly Dance, amidst the Lustre of that artificial Day; but the solitary Bat flits in silent Circles, or flaps her sooty Wings.—All those gay Delights—let the Sons of *Sensuality* hear the Tale, and take Warning from the Catastrophe!—all those gay Delights are extinguished, like one of their feeblest Tapers; which, having illuminated for a-while the festive Assembly, shone itself to the Edges of the exhausted Socket, and in a Moment flashed into Stench and Darknefs.

The *Walls*, were cemented with Bitumen *, and consolidated into the Firmness of a Flint. The *Towers* were more like the everlasting Mountains †, than

* The Walls were built of Brick, and cemented with a glutinous Kind of Slime; which binds more firmly than any Mortar, and soon grows harder, than the Brick or Stones themselves.—These Fortifications were, according to the Account given by *Herodotus*, in *Breadth* eighty-seven Feet, in *Height* three hundred and fifty Feet, and reckoned to be absolutely *impregnable*. Infomuch that the Inhabitants, when besieged by *Cyrus*, insulted Him from the Walls, and laughed at his Attempt, as a vain impracticable Project.—Οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ τειχεὶ καλεσθῶν τὴν πόλιν. XENOPH. *Inst. Cyr.* Lib. VII.

† *Berosus*, describing some of the Edifices, erected in this City, says; Τῆς οὖν ἀποδοῦς ὁμοιοῦσθαι τοῖς ὄρεσι. Such was their Compass and Elevation, that they appeared like

than the Work of human Hands. The Inhabitants, confiding in such prodigious Bulwarks, defied the approaching Enemy; and looked down with a fearless Disdain, on the Army of Besiegers. But now the Prophet's Threatening is most terribly fulfilled; *Babylon is fallen, is fallen* *. *Her broad Walls are utterly broken* †. And all Her Fortifications, though strong and stable, as the united Productions of the Quarry and the Forest could make them, *are demolished; are laid low; are brought to the Ground, even to the Dust* ‡.

Where are the *Gates*, the grand and glittering *Gates* ||, which admitted the triumphant Hosts, or poured forth their numerous Legions against the Day of Battle? Not one Trace remains, to tell the inquisitive Stranger; "Here the spacious Avenues" opened: Here the massy Portals rose,"—Commodious *Walks*, in which the clustering Merchants raised the busy Hum, and planned the Schemes of Commerce; ample *Streets*, in which Industry drove the toiling Car, or smote the sounding Anvil; are shrouded with matted Grass, or buried beneath the rankest

Mountains. This may be the Reason, why *Babylon*, though situate in a Plain, is called a *Mountain*; Behold! *I am against Thee, O destroying Mountain, saith the LORD*. Though I rather think, the Word is to be taken in the figurative Sense, frequently used by the Prophets. Who by *Mountain*, express a *powerful*, by *Forest*, a *populous* State or City. *Jer. li. 25.*

* *Isai. xxi. 9.*

xxv. 12.

† *Jer. li. 58.*

Joseph. Antiq. Lib. X.

‡ *Isai.*

|| There were no less than an hundred Gates, all of *solid Brass*. Hence it is, that when JEHOVAH promises to make *Cyrus* Master of *Babylon*, He speaks in this very remarkable and particularizing Manner; *I will break in Pieces before Thee the Gates of Brass*, *Isai. xlv. 2.*

rankest Weeds. Silence, in both Places, a fullen Silence reigns; and Inactivity, a death-like Inactivity, slumbers.

What is become of those *Hanging-gardens*, which, for curious Contrivance, and stupendous Labour, were never equaled in any Nation under Heaven? *Terraces*, that overlooked the tallest Houses? *Parterres*, exalted to the Clouds, and opening their flowery Beauties in that strange Region! *Groves*, whose very Roots were higher than the Tops of the loftiest Trees *!—They are now smitten by a dreadful Blast. Their Beauty is decayed, like a withered Leaf. Their very Being is gone, *like the Chaff of the Summer Threshing-floors; which the Wind carrieth away, and its Place is no where found* †. What was once the favourite Retreat of a Queen, and the Admiration of the whole World, is now a Nest for poisonous Reptiles, and a Kennel for ravenous Beasts.—The Traveler, instead of expatiating with Delight, where this *pensile Paradise* flourished, is struck with Horror; keeps at a trembling Distance; and, lifting his Eyes to Heaven, as He surveys the rueful Spot, cries out; *Righteous art Thou, O LORD, and true are thy Judgments!*

Here stands an *Obelisk*, maimed by the Stroke of revolving Years, like a Mountain-Oak shattered by the flaming Bolt. Another, all unhinged and quite disjointed, seems to tremble before every Blast that blows.—There, the *Pyramid* ‡; firm as the solid Rock,

* *Pensiles Horti sunt, summam Murorum Altitudinem æquant, multarumque Arborum Umbra & Proceritate amœni.*

CURT. Lib. V.

† Dan. ii. 35.

‡ Strabo calls the Temple of Belus a Pyramid. Lib. XV.

Rock, and steadfast, One would have thought, as the perpetual Hills; wrenched from its mighty Base, is tumbled headlong in enormous Ruin, and has crushed many a Structure by its Fall.—See, yonder, the *triumphal Arch*; which exhibited, through its extensive and beautiful Bend, an advantageous View of the Firmament. It was, once, the graceful Memorial of some celebrated Victory; it is, now, converted into a Trophy of a very different Kind. Such is its proud aspiring Brow; and nothing remains, but two uneven, battered, ragged Stumps; which serve to recognize the destructive Ravages of Time; or rather, the irresistible Vengeance of Heaven.

Spires, that pierced the Clouds, and shot into the Skies, are leveled with the trodden Soil. On *Pinnacles*, to which the strong-winged Bird could hardly soar, the groveling Worm crawls, and the sordid Snail leaves her slimy Track.—*Baths*, that contained the translucent Wave, and were so often perfumed with odoriferous Unguents, are choked with Filth; the grand *Colonnade*, that surrounded them, is shivered to Pieces; and the elevated *Dome*, that covered them, is dashed to the Ground.—Where the public *Aqueducts* conveyed Cleanliness and Health, along their crystal Currents; there, croaking Vermine swarm among the Weeds, and noisome Exhalations steam from the Mire.—I look round on the Plains, the almost

But if the Critics in History should question or deny the Existence of Pyramids among the *Babylonians*, for this and other Liberties used by our young Declaimer, *Horace* shall make an Apology:

————— *Pictoribus atque Poetis*
Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua Potestas.

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almost boundless Plains, on which this superb imperial City arose! They were once a Magazine of Plenty, a Source of vegetable Riches, for their royal Mistress. What are they now? A foul, incurable Morass; a dead, stagnating Lake. *A Possession for the Bittern, and Pools of Water* *.

August and stately Temples, which seemed to affect the Neighbourhood of the Skies †, are prostrate in the very Dust.—Who can point the Spot, where the consecrated Victim bled, or the sacred Fire glowed? Where the sceptred Image lifted its majestic Head, or the venerating Crouds bowed the suppliant Knee ‡? Degraded are those splendid Vanities, and cast (according to the Denunciation of the sacred Oracles) *to the Bats and to the Moles* §. All is low; low as the spurious Dignity of the Idols they complimented; low as *the Straw, that is trodden down for the Dunghil* §.

Sepulchres,

* Isai. xiv. 23.

† A Tower in the Temple of *Belus*, and dedicated to his Worship, was most amazingly high. It consisted of eight Piles of Building, erected one above another. It arose to the Elevation of six hundred Feet perpendicular. And is thought, by the learned *Bochart*, to have been Part of that superb Work, which was begun when *the whole Earth was of one Language*: but miscarried, or rather was providentially defeated, by the Confusion of Tongues. In this Structure, there were doubtless very strong Traces of that arrogant Boast; *Let Us build Us a City and a Tower, whose Top may reach to Heaven*, Gen. xi. 4.

‡ Alluding to that prodigious Instance of Profuseness, Ostentation, and idolatrous Madness, *the golden Image set up in the Plain of Dura: whose Height* (that is, the Height of the Statue and Pedestal taken together) *was threescore Cubits*, Dan. iii. 1. See *PRIDEAUX's Connection*, Vol. I. p. 95, &c. p. 567, &c.

§ Isai. ii. 20.

§ Isai. xxv. 10.

Sepulchres, venerable Repositories of the Dead; awful Mansions, destined to everlasting Concealment; are cleft and rent asunder. They disclose the horrid Secrets of the Pit, and frightfully yawn upon the blasted Day. Possibly, some ravenous Creature lurks within, that has already rifled the Tomb of its Hero; given the putrid Bones a new Grave; and waits only for the Approach of Night, to repeat his Dirge in Yells.—*Inscriptions*, designed to perpetuate some illustrious Character, or eternize some heroic Deed, are blended in the promiscuous Mass. In vain, would the prying Antiquary search for a legible or consistent Sentence: in vain, attempt to find the memorable Names of a *Nebuchadnezzar* or a *Nimrod*. These, though engraved on Plates of Brass, or cut in Blocks of Marble, are lost amidst the stupendous Lumber; as Prints on the unsteady Sand are effaced, when returning Tides smooth the furrowed Beach.

Here and there a straggling Cypress rises, as it were with funeral Solemnity, amidst the Waste *. Somewhat like the black Flames, nodding over the mournful Hearse, they augment the Sadness of the Scene, and throw a deeper Horror on all below.—No human Voice is heard, nor human Face seen, amidst these desolated Heaps. Too dreary, even for the Roam of hoary Hermit, or the Cell of gloomy Monk. Abandoned they are, totally abandoned, to the

* *Rauwolf*, a German Traveler, who passed that Way, in the Year of our LORD 1574, says; "This Country is so dry and barren, that it cannot be tilled; and so bare, that I should have doubted, whether the potent *Babylon* did stand there, if I had not known it by several antient and delicate Antiquities, that are still standing hereabout in great Desolation."

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the Dominion of Solitude; or else, to the unmo-
lestet Refort of shaggy Monsters, and feathered
Hags; which stun the midnight Hours—*these*, with
their importunate Shrieks—*those*, with their exe-
crable Howls.

See! to what a despicable, what an abhorred
State, the proudest Monuments of earthly Gran-
deur, and the most costly Apparatus for earthly
Felicity, may be reduced! A pregnant and alarm-
ing Proof, that, for *lasting Honour*, or *real Hap-
piness*,

They build too low, who build beneath the Skies.

Asp. I very much approve the Choice of your
Subject. The Ruins of *Persopolis*, would have given
Us a View of Magnificence in Abasement. The
Ruins of *Palmyra*, might have shewed Us Elegance
in the Dust. But the Ruins of *Babylon* display at
once, Magnificence and Elegance under an Eclipse,
Scripture and *Revelation* in their Glory.—The De-
struction of this City, which was absolutely un-
equaled * in every Instance of Dignity, and seem-
ingly

* *Unequaled*—Represented therefore by the golden Head
in *Nebuchadnezzar's* prophetic Dream, and emblematic
Image, *Dan. ii. 38.*—Described by an antient Author,
as *Omnium quas unquam Sol aspexit Urbium maxima.*—And
most magnificently pourtrayed, together with its entire
Demolition, in the Prophet's beautiful Draught. *Thou
hast made of a City, an Heap; of a defenced City, a Ruin;
a Palace of Strangers, to be no City.—A City—a defenced
City—a Palace; so grand and stately, that it seemed like
one continued Palace. Yet this incomparably grand
City, shall become a Heap of Rubbish—a frightful and
hideous Ruin—no City; nothing like it; without any
Indication or Token, that it was ever inhabited. Isai.
xxv. 2.*

singly invincible by any Enemy, must certainly have been looked upon as the *most improbable* of Events. Nevertheless its utter Destruction was decreed by JEHOVAH, and denounced by his Prophet, several Ages before the Execution took place. The awful Sentence was not only denounced, but recorded; and is still remaining in the public Archives of our Religion.

Ther. Where is this Sentence recorded, and remaining?

Asp. In the Prophecy of *Isaiab*. And not only recorded, but in the most circumstantial Manner, and with a minute Detail of the horrible Desolations. These are the Words of the inspired Writer; *BABYLON, the Glory of Kingdoms, the Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency, shall be as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from Generation to Generation: Neither shall the Arabian pitch Tent there; neither shall the Shepherds make their Fold there. But wild Beasts of the Desert shall lie there, and their Houses shall be full of doleful Creatures, and Owls shall dwell there, and Satyrs shall dance there. And the wild Beasts of the Islands shall cry in their desolate Houses, and Dragons in their pleasant Palaces* *.

In the two first Sentences, is comprised the most finished Picture of Prosperity and Grandeur. *The Glory of Kingdoms*; beyond every other royal Seat, spacious, ornamented, and wealthy; revered by many conquered and tributary Dominions, as their Mistress, and their Sovereign.—*The Beauty of the Chaldees Excellency*: The Chaldeans, who excelled all the Nations of the Earth in Riches, in Splendor,

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* Isai. xiii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

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and in Power, *even they* gloried in this imperial City. This was the highest Honour of the most illustrious, and chief Strength of the most victorious People; fairest, where all was conspicuously fair; noblest, where all was supereminently noble.—Yet this distinguished, this crowning City, *shall*, at the blasting of the Breath of JEHOVAH, be totally, totally destroyed, even as when GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

In describing the Overthrow, the Prophet is equally admirable; and rises, by a most judicious Gradation, into all the Pomp of Horror. *q. d.*
 “ Now, indeed, it is thronged with Citizens; but,
 “ the Hour is coming, when it shall be entirely
 “ depopulated, and not so much as a single Inhabitant left.—Lest You should think, that in Process of Time it may be re-edified, and again
 “ abound with joyful Multitudes, *it shall never be*
 “ *inhabited* more; no, *never be dwelt in* any more,
 “ *from Generation to Generation*; but shall continue
 “ a dismal Waste, through all succeeding Ages.—
 “ A Waste so dismal, that none of the neighbouring *Shepherds* shall *make their Fold*, or find so
 “ much as an occasional Shelter for their Flocks;
 “ where Kings, Grandees, and Crouds of affluent
 “ Citizens, were wont to repose themselves in profound Tranquility. Even the rude and roving
 “ *Arabian*, shall not venture to *pitch his Tent*, nor
 “ be able to procure for Himself the poor Accommodation of a Night’s Lodging; where Millions
 “ of polite People basked in the Sunshine of profuse
 “ Prosperity.—In short; it shall neither be habitable, nor accessible; but a *Dwelling-place for*
 “ *Dragons*, and a *Court for Owls*; an *Astonishment*,
 “ and

110 DIALOGUE XI.

“and a Hissing*.” What was once the golden City †, “and the Metropolis of the World, shall be an “everlasting Scene of Desolation; a fearful Monument of divine Vengeance, and an awful Admonition to human Pride.”

All this is foretold in Scripture; and, though to human Appearance impossible, though to human Apprehension incredible, was, in the appointed Time, most minutely accomplished. The Memorials and Evidences of the Accomplishment remain to this very Day †. They are so *authentic*, that the most inquisitive Curiosity cannot doubt; so *incontestable*, that the most bigotted Incredulity dares not deny. Should not all this teach Us, to reverence

* Jer. li. 37.

† Isai. xiv. 4.

† It is said, by a very learned and sagacious Author; *Babylonem usque eo concidisse, ut Nemo cum Fiducia illius Locum amplius demonstrare queat.* VITRING. in *Isai.*—Which Testimony is confirmed, and almost translated, by a celebrated modern Traveler. “The Ruins of *Babylon* are “now so much effaced, that there are hardly any Vestiges of them, to point out their Situation.” HANWAY’S *Travels*, Vol. II.

Should my Readers prefer this Account, I shall neither litigate the Point, nor be anxious for the Consequence. It may indeed rank *Eugenio*’s Composition among the Works of Fancy. But it will realize *Aspasio*’s Assertion, and corroborate his Argument. If We find *no Memorials* of the City, We have the *most evident* Verification, and the *fullest* Accomplishment, of the Prophecy.

If this be the Case, it gives an amazing Emphasis to that just, but terrible Decree, issued from the supreme Tribunal, *Isai. xiv. 23.* *I will sweep it with the Besom of Destruction, saith the LORD of Hosts.* “I will not only “lay it in Ruins, but extirpate it from the Earth. I “will efface the very Footsteps of its Existence; and “not leave so much as a *Fragment* or a *Trace* of the magnificent, but wicked *Babylon.*”—*Destroy Her utterly; let nothing of Her be left.* Jer. l. 26.

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DIALOGUE XI. 111

rence the Authority, to admire the Wisdom, and confide in the Promises, of that most sure and infallible Word?

I know, You are not fond of Compliments, *Theron*. Therefore, instead of speaking my Opinion of your Son's Performance, I will endeavour to return your Favour.—You have entertained me with an Account of the most memorable Ruins, extant in the material World. Let me present my Friend with a Picture of Ruins, no less *remarkable*, far more *deplorable*, and unspeakably *interesting* to Us all. I shall give it, in the Colouring of a great Master; whose Works, this very Day, I happened to be perusing.

The Passage displays a Doctrine, of the utmost Importance in the Christian Scheme; and by one of the finest Pieces of Imagery, to be met with in elegant Writing. I think, it may be looked upon, as a *practical Improvement* of *Eugenio's* Declamation. It pleased me so much, that I transcribed it; and I make no Apology for reading it, because I shall expect your Thanks.—Only let me hint, that it considers the human Soul, as originally an Habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT; and then, speaking of its fallen Condition, proceeds.

“ That He *bath withdrawn Himself*, and left
 “ *this his Temple* desolate, We have many sad and
 “ plain Proofs before Us. The *stately Ruins* are
 “ visible to every Eye, that bear in their Front (yet
 “ extant) this doleful Inscription; HERE GOD
 “ ONCE DWELT. Enough appears of the ad-
 “ mirable Frame and Structure of the *Soul of Man*,
 “ to shew the divine Presence did sometime reside

“ in it; more than enough of vicious *Deformity*, to
 “ proclaim He is now *retired* and *gone*. The *Lamps*
 “ are extinct, the *Altar* overturned; the *Light* and
 “ *Love* are now vanished, which did the one *shine*,
 “ with so heavenly Brightness; the other *burn*, with
 “ so pious Fervour. The *golden Candlestick* is dis-
 “ placed, and thrown away as an useless Thing, to
 “ make room for the Throne of the *Prince of Dark-*
 “ *ness*. The *sacred Incense*, which sent rolling up
 “ in Clouds its rich Perfumes, is exchanged for a
 “ poisonous hellish Vapour; and here is, *instead of*
 “ *a sweet Savour, a Stench*. The comely Order of
 “ this House is turned all into Confusion. The
 “ *Beauties of Holiness* into *noisome Impurities*. The
 “ *House of Prayer* to a *Den of Thieves*, and that of
 “ the worst and most horrid Kind; for every *Lust*
 “ is a *Thief*, and every *Theft* is *Sacrilege*. Con-
 “ tinual Rapine and Robbery is committed upon
 “ *holy Things*. The noble Powers, which were de-
 “ signed and dedicated to *divine Contemplation* and
 “ *Delight*, are alienated to the Service of the most
 “ despicable Idols, and employed unto the vilest
 “ Intuitions and Embraces; to behold and admire
 “ *lying Vanities*, to indulge and cherish Lust and
 “ Wickedness.”

“ There is not now a System, an entire Table
 “ of *coherent Truths* to be found, or a *Frame of Ho-*
 “ *liness*, but some shivered Parcels. How many
 “ Attempts have been made, since that fearful Fall
 “ and Ruin of this Fabric, to compose again the
 “ Truths of so many several Kinds into their distinct
 “ Orders, and make up Frames of Science or useful
 “ Knowledge! and after so many Ages, nothing is
 “ finished in any Kind. Sometimes, Truths are
 “ misplaced,

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“ misplaced, and what belongs to *one Kind*, is trans-
 “ ferred to *another*, where it will not fitly match;
 “ sometimes, *Falshood inserted*, which shatters or dis-
 “ turbs the whole Frame. And what with much
 “ fruitless Pains, is done by one Hand, is dashed in
 “ Pieces by another; and it is the Work of a *fol-*
 “ *lowing* Age to sweep away the fine-spun Cobwebs
 “ of a *former*. And those Truths, which are of
 “ greatest Use, are least regarded; their Tendency
 “ and Design are overlooked, or they are so loosened
 “ and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so
 “ as to take hold of the Soul; but hover as *faint*
 “ *ineffectual* Notions, that signify Nothing. Its very
 “ fundamental Powers are shaken and disjointed,
 “ and their Order towards one another confounded
 “ and broken. So that what is judged *considerable*,
 “ is not *considered*; what is recommended as *eligible*
 “ and *lovely*, is not loved and chosen. Yea, the
 “ Truth which is after Godliness, is not so much
 “ *disbelieved*, as *hated*, *held in Unrighteousness*: and
 “ shines as too feeble a *Light*, in that malignant
 “ Darkness, which *comprehends it not*. You come,
 “ amidst all this Confusion, as into the ruined Pa-
 “ lace of some great Prince, in which You see here
 “ the Fragments of a noble Pillar, there the shat-
 “ tered Pieces of some curious Imagery: and all ly-
 “ ing neglected and useless amongst Heaps of Dirt.
 “ He that invites You to take a View of the Soul
 “ of Man, gives You but such another Prospect,
 “ and doth but say to You, *Behold the Desolation*,
 “ all Things rude and waste. So that should there
 “ be any Pretence to the divine Presence, it might
 “ be said, *If GOD be here, why is it thus?* The
 “ faded Glory, the Darkness, the Disorder, the
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" Impurity, the decayed State in all Respects of
 " this Temple, too plainly shew, *The GREAT*
 " *INHABITANT* is gone *."

Ther. Your Painter, I must own, is a Master in his Profession; and seems to have a peculiar Talent for a *Night-piece*.—But why, I beseech You, so much of his Shades and Solemnity? Has He no Colours, but the dark? No Lineaments, but the sour? Could He not allow Us one bright Tint, one smiling Feature? when He was copying the noblest Being in this sublunary World?—Is it for the Honour of the great CREATOR, to give such a deformed Draught of his most finished Workmanship?

Asp. It reflects no kind of Dishonour upon the Architect of *Babylon*, that its Palaces are fallen, its Edifices demolished, and its Walls leveled with the Ground. They might have been built with the exactest Symmetry, and once embellished with every graceful Ornament; notwithstanding the Stroke of Violence, or the Sap of Years, have now reduced them to Heaps of Rubbish.—The human Soul, when recent from the Inspiration of the ALMIGHTY, was bright with Knowledge, amiable with Virtue, and in every Respect excellent. But *How*—to speak in the Language of the mourning Prophet; a Language never more pertinent than on the present Occasion—*How is the Gold become dim! How is the most fine Gold changed!*

Ther. Man's Soul is rational and eternal; is the Offspring of the DEITY, and capable of resembling its MAKER.

* See Mr. Howe's Treatise, intitled *The living Temple*.

Asp. What *Milton* allows to the fallen Archangel,
I can readily allow to fallen Man :

————— *He had not lost*
All his original Brightness, nor appear'd
Less than Archangel ruin'd.

The grand and distinguishing Faculties of the Soul remain ; so as to bespeak a Child of Glory ruined. When a Fountain is poisoned, the Waters continue to flow : but flow no longer with *Health*, flow rather with *Death* in the Stream. These very Faculties, unless renewed and regulated by the Influence of Religion, must be our present Misery, and will prove our everlasting Curse.—“ The Soul,” You say, “ is rational, is eternal.” And do not even the Devils possess the Powers of Reason ? Is not *their* Existence also of an endless Duration ? Yet are they, of all Creatures, the most execrable and the most miserable.

You call the human Soul, the Offspring of the DEITY. And You call it properly. Must We not then adopt the Prophet's Exclamation, “ *How art Thou fallen, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning* * ! “ How art Thou degenerated, O Man, Son of the “ MOST HIGH ! Thy glorious Original serves “ only to set forth, with more glaring Evidence, “ thy deplorable Apostacy.”

Capable, You add, of resembling its MAKER. This, I acknowledge, is a valuable Prerogative. In this the infernal Spirits have no Share. But this Capacity will always lie dormant ; will never awaken

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* *Isai.* xiv. 12,

into Act; never be established in Habit; unless Almighty GRACE intervene.

Ther. The most celebrated Philosophers of Antiquity, frequently exhort their Readers to *follow Nature*; as a certain Guide to true Excellence.—Many eloquent Writers of our own Country, enlarge upon the *Dignity* of human Nature; and from this Topic derive very forcible Arguments, for a correspondent Dignity both of Sentiment and Behaviour.—Upon what can those Principles of the antient Sages, and of our later Moralists, be founded?

Asp. Indeed, *Theron*, I am at a loss to tell. If they have any Foundation, it is merely imaginary; not laid in Truth, nor confirmed by Experience.—According to my Apprehension, they invert the Order of Things. They take that for a *Postulatum*, which ought to be ranked among the *Desiderata*; and make an Axiom of a mere Figment.

Had Man continued, as He was created; to act according to Nature, and according to the Law of GOD, would have been one and the same Thing. For which Reason, We find no Precepts of Religion, no Delineation of Morality, given to *Adam* in Paradise. Because, Religion and Morality were engraven on his Heart: or rather, they resulted from the very Bent and Tendency of his perfect Frame.—But since the Fall, it is quite otherwise.

Ther. Have not many of the antient Worthies been *living Confutations* of your Opinion? Wise Philosophers, judicious Lawgivers, and steady Ministers of Justice? Their Desires refined, their Affections benevolent, their whole Conduct upright.

Asp. I cannot forbear wondering, that You should instance in Lawgivers and Ministers of Justice.

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Since the very Institution of their Office *presupposes* the Depravity of Mankind. Was human Nature agitated by no irregular or vicious Inclinations, the Barrier of Laws would be as needless in civil Societies, as the vast Banks of *Holland* are needless in our upland Counties.

But this, You will say, is a digressive Observation. Your Question requires a positive Answer. And it is easy to answer, That the Painting is beyond the Life. If my Author has been too free with the *dark*, my Friend has been too lavish of the *glittering* Colours.—Those famous Men might aim, perhaps, at the Excellency You describe. Not one of them came up to the Mark.—Or, suppose they did, this would not invalidate my Tenet.

Ther. This not invalidate your Tenet! Then Demonstration carries no Conviction.

Asp. Pray, who is your greatest Favourite, among all the renowned Persons of Antiquity?

Ther. Socrates.—He stands at the Head of the Class; and was, indisputably, the wisest and the best of the Heathen World.

Asp. I think so too.—Be pleased, however, to recollect the Story of the *Physiognomist*; who pretended to discover the Disposition of the Mind, by the Cast of the Countenance. The Professor of this occult Science undertook, You know, to exercise his Skill upon *Socrates*; and pronounced Him, after an Examination of his Features, lascivious, passionate, and morose.—This Judgment, so extravagantly wide of the Truth, was bringing a Storm of Ridicule and Resentment upon the poor Fortune-teller. When the ingenuous Philosopher interposed, and owned the Description to be exactly true. That

such was his *natural* Temper; and if his Conversation was of a different Turn, it was owing to the Aids of Philosophy.—So that, even in your most finished * Character, there was no innate Dignity. All was *adventitious*.

Ther. If Corruption was derived unto all Men from their Forefather *Adam*; methinks, all should be equally corrupt. But this is contrary to known Fact. Some We see naturally loving and lovely; gentle in their Manners; and subject to no inordinate Appetites.

Asp. Some Persons may be of *more gentle*, or, if You please, of *less dissolute* Manners, than the Generality of other People. Thanks to a better Temperature

* Though I love and admire the Character of *Socrates*, yet I cannot approve the whole of his Conduct. One Thing which gives me particular Offence is, the *habitual* Practice of *Swearing*, which occurs in all his Conferences with his Pupils. *Μα τον Δία, Νη Δι'*, or some such Appeal to the DEITY is used, not only in every Discourse, but almost in every Page; and that upon the most *unnecessary* Occasions.—I have often wondered, that so polite a Writer as *Xenophon*, should admit this flagrant Impropriety into his Dialogues. Which, besides its *irreligious* Air, is somewhat like the *Crambe repetita*; and recurs, and recurs, and recurs, till it is really tiresome. But much more I wonder, that his excellent Master, should suffer the Sanction of an Oath, to become so *trivial*; and make the Honour of his *Jupiter*, so *cheap*.

This proves the deplorable *Blindness* of human Reason; which could mistake so notorious a Profanation of the Divine Name, for a genteel Embellishment of Speech—It shews Us, likewise, our extreme Need of that revealed Law, which, among other refined Precepts, unknown to the Religion of Nature, enjoins; *Above all Things, swear not*—And *Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy GOD in vain*.

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perature of their Constitution, or a more watchful Care in their Education.—Politeness may mimic Charity, or fine Breeding may personate Humility. One vile Affection may check another, or a Sense of Decency may hold Curb upon all.—But shew me the unregenerate Man, who is subject to no inordinate Appetites. When the very best unregenerate Man, that ever lived, acknowledges concerning Himself; *Sin, original Corruption, wrought in me all Manner of Concupiscence* *. And even the Stoic Philosopher cannot but confess, *Omnia in Omnibus Vitia sunt* †.

Ther. Have We not often observed heroic Courage, and a Generosity of Spirit, where the Education has been none of the strictest? To what can we ascribe these laudable Qualities, but to the innate Virtue and Nobleness of the Temper, working without any auxiliary Succours?

Asp. Virtue, *Theron*, is a complete Assemblage, not some disjointed Shreds, of laudable Qualities. Those You mention, if not accompanied with the whole Circle of amiable Accomplishments, are no more to be called Virtue; than two or three scattered Fragments of an Edifice, are to be honoured with the Appellation of an House.—How often are those very Persons, with all their Fortitude, Slaves to ignoble Pleasures, or in Bondage to the basest Lusts. A most infallible Indication, that they have no uniform Generosity, nor any real Courage.—Desire of Fame, may prompt to many such Acts, as dazzle the superficial Eye: which yet are far, very far from genuine Virtue.

Ther. Do You then attribute the Grecian Politeness and the high Roman Spirit, with all the gallant

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* Rom. vii. 8.

† Sen. *De Ben.* Lib. IV.

Actions of their Heroes and their Generals, to a Desire of Fame?

Asp. There is Reason to suspect, that they derived their Origin from some improper Motive. And no Motive was more artfully instilled, or more assiduously cherished, than the Spirit of Ambition.—View their Crowns, their Statues, their triumphal Solemnities—Read their Orators, their Historians, their Poets—The former were the *School*, the latter were the *Masters*, to inculcate this grand Lesson.

Let Us consider the *Romans* a little more attentively; and not amidst the Dregs of their Community, but in their very best Ages; when their Republic subsisted, and their *Scipios* flourished. Many great and shining Deeds were undoubtedly performed. But did they spring from a *reverential Regard* to the Supreme BEING; from Obedience to his Will, or Zeal for his Honour?

If this Principle should be thought too refined, did they proceed from a *Love* to their *Fellow-creatures*? In case, neither of these Motives * actuated their Conduct, it can never be placed to the Account of Virtue.—Had Benevolence been their leading Principle, why such *Inhumanity* to *Carthage*? Why must that opulent City be laid in Ashes, and

* A Zeal for the Honour of GOD, and a Concern for the Good of our Fellow-creatures, are the true Sources of Virtue, 1 *Cor.* x. 24, 31. When our Actions flow not from these Principles, Reason will put a *Query* upon them, and Revelation will *expunge* them from the List of Virtues.—They may be specious in themselves; they may be costly to the Performer; they may even be serviceable to Others. But can no more deserve the Title of *Virtue*, than the Activity of our Sun-fire Officers, in extinguishing the Flames on some insured House, can merit the Name of *Charity*.

her numerous Citizens be put to the Sword? Were they Enemies to Mankind, or a Nuisance in the World? You well know, that they were only too industrious, and too powerful. By which Means, they would be in a Condition, to eclipse the Magnificence of the *Roman* Name, and dispute the Prize of Sovereignty with the *Roman* State. For this Crime—a Crime in Ambition's Eye, absolutely inexcusable—even *Cato's* upright Soul, shall doom them to utter Destruction; and *Scipio's* gentle Hand, shall execute the horrid Decree.

Is *this* Virtue? Does Virtue ravage Countries, from the mere Wantonness of Pride, or Lust of Pre-eminence? Does Virtue destroy Millions of Lives, only to aggrandize a particular People, or extend the Dominion of some favourite Empire? If *this* were Virtue, *Brutus* thought too honourably of her Character, when he termed Her an *empty Name*.—I am sure, my *Theron* has juster Notions of Things. He need not be informed, that true Virtue, far from personating the rapacious Harpy, acts as a Father to Others, as a Father to all. And, like HIM, who is both its Pattern and its Author, *goes about doing Good*.

Ther. The most elegant Cane, if plunged into yonder Bason, while the Waters are curled by the Breeze, will appear both crooked and coarse. I cannot but think, the Accusers of human Nature examine her State with a *prejudiced* Understanding. Which has the same perverse Effect upon their Judgment, as those ruffled Waves have upon the Sight.—Or else, they contemplate her Condition with a *melancholy* Mind; which, like a jaundiced Eye, gives every

every Object a distempered Aspect; darkens the chearful; discolours the beautiful; and hangs even the Sun in Mourning.

Assp. Rather let this be the Comparison, to illustrate our Point.—View the meanest Piece of Earth, through the *Prismatic* Glass; and it will appear, not beautiful only, but perfectly splendid. Remove the delusory Medium, and all the sophisticated Finery vanishes. The Indigo, the Orange, the Violet are gone: and leave nothing to be seen, but a rude unornamented Lump of Clay.—So, if We consider human Nature, according to the *partial* Representations of Self-love; or contemplate it, in the *flattering* Mirrour of some popular Writings; it may seem regular, holy, excellent. But, if We behold it under the Light, the unerring Light of Revelation, its fancied Charms disappear; it stands clothed with Deformity; and is a Spectacle of Commiseration, if not of Horror.

Ther. What Reason have You to father such a Notion upon the sacred Writings?—The sacred Writings inform Us, that Man was made *after the Image of GOD*. This, sure, could not be so dishonourable and depraved a Pattern, as your Discourse would insinuate.

Assp. Far, very far from a dishonourable Pattern! The Image of GOD is the *consummate Standard* of all Perfection.—In Conformity to this admirable Exemplar, our first Parents were created; and in this admirable Condition they continued, till by Transgression they *fell*. Fell from the most holy and happy State, into Guilt, Condemnation, and Ruin.—Therefore, when this fatal Catastrophe had taken place, the sacred Historian varies his Style; and

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and with a remarkable Peculiarity, as well as Propriety of Speech, says, *Adam begat a Son in his own**, not in the DIVINE, *Likeness*. That every Reader may advert to this melancholy, but important Truth; it is marked more strongly still; it is enforced by a very emphatical Repetition. *After his own Image* †, now fallen and corrupted; and therefore contradistinguished to the Image of GOD, mentioned in a preceding Verse. Which Expressions are evidently intended, to denote the Difference between the State, in which *Adam* was created, and *Seth* was begotten.

Ther. Pray, let me have a succinct, but full Account of this tragical Story. Since all your orthodox Divines lay such a mighty Stress upon the Doctrine of the *Fall*.

Asp. GOD, having formed the human Body out of the Ground, animated the Structure with a living Soul; and transcribed upon this Soul the Image of his blessed SELF. All was Light in the Understanding; all was Rectitude in the Will; and nothing but Harmony in the Affections.—Man, thus endowed, was placed in the delightful Garden of *Eden*; and furnished with every Accommodation, which was necessary to support his Being, or desirable to gratify his Senses.—He was constituted Lord of this lower Creation, and, amidst numberless Indulgences, received only *one—easy—negative* Command—*not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*.—From this He was to abstain, as a Pledge

* This is affirmed, not of *Cain*, but of *Seth*, the most excellent of *Adam's* Children, and Father of the holy Seed.

† בדמותו כצלמו Gen. v. 3.

Pledge of his Subjection, and as an Exercise of his Obedience. Bliss and Immortality were to be the Reward of Duty; Misery and Death the Punishment of Disobedience. *In the Day Thou eatest thereof, Thou shalt surely die **, was the Sanction of the divine Law.

How equitable! How gracious the Terms! Yet, neither the Goodness of GOD, could induce Him to keep them; nor the Authority of GOD, deter Him from breaking them.—Unreasonably discontented even with such advantageous Circumstances, and presumptuously aspiring to be like the MOST HIGH, He hearkened to the Suggestions of the evil Spirit.—In a Word; He violated the Precept, and incurred the Penalty. GOD was just, and Man was undone. He lost his Uprightness †; became subject to Mortality; and, as the nervous Original expresses it, *Died the Death*.

Ther. True; He became subject to many bodily Infirmities, and to the Necessity of final Dissolution.—But, what has this Sentence, or what have these Sufferings to do with *your* Notion of universal Depravity in the Mind? The Death, which the Almighty LEGISLATOR threatened, can be opposed only to the Life, which the Almighty CREATOR gave.

Asp. Be it so.—The CREATOR gave, and Man possessed a Life, incomparably more excellent, than that which the Pulse imparts, or the Beasts enjoy.

* Gen. ii. 17.

† ———— *Innocence, that as a Veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing Ill, was gone,
Just Confidence, and native Righteousness,*

MILT. Book IX. 1054.

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joy. He possessed a *divine Life*. Which, according to the Definition of the Apostle, consisted in *Knowledge, in Righteousness, and true Holiness* *. This—which was the distinguishing Glory, and the supreme Felicity of his Nature—this, alas! was extinct.

His Understanding, originally enlightened with Wisdom, was clouded and overwhelmed with Ignorance.—His Heart, once filled with religious Veneration, and warmed with heavenly Love, became alienated from GOD, his MAKER.—His Passions and Appetites, rational and regular before, shook off the Government of Order and Reason. The whole moral Frame was unhinged, disjointed, broken; or, in other Words, *the Life of GOD* was departed from the Soul.

Ther. What Cause have You to suppose, that all this Misery was either included in the Threatening, or introduced by the Fall?

Asp. The *Ignorance* of fallen *Adam* was palpable. Witness that absurd Attempt, to hide Himself from the Eye of OMNISCIENCE †; among the Trees of the Garden.—His *Aversion* to the All-gracious GOD was equally plain. Otherwise, He would never have fled from his MAKER; but rather have hasted, and on the Wings of Desire, into the Place of the divine Manifestation.

A strange Variety of *disorderly Passions* ‡, were evidently predominant in his Breast—*Pride*; for He refuses

* *Eph.* iv. 24. *Col.* iii. 10. This is what *Moses* calls, *The Image of GOD*.

† Πόσῃς ἐκ ἀν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ; τὸν Θεόν, τὸν πανταχῶς παρὼντα, τοὺς ταλαιπώρους ἐπισημαίνοντες, τὸν χρυστεύοντα ἐπὶ χερσίν; *Chrysoft.*

‡ *Milton*, speaking of the unhappy Pair, and describing the Consequences of their Fall, says:

refuses to acknowledge his Guilt, though He cannot but own the Fact—*Ingratitude*; for He obliquely upbraids the CREATOR with his Gift, as though it had been a Snare, rather than a Blessing; *The Woman, whom Thou gavest me—Want of natural Affection*; for He endeavours to cast all the Blame upon the weaker Vessel; and to acquit his obnoxious Self, by impeaching the Wife of his Bosom.—The female Criminal acts the same unhumbléd Part. She neither takes Shame to Herself; nor gives Glory to GOD; nor puts up a single Petition for Pardon.

As all these Disasters ensued, upon the Breach of the Commandment; they furnish Us, I think, with the best Key to open the Meaning of the prohibitory Sanction. They prove, beyond any Argument, that spiritual Death, and all its Consequences, were comprehended in the Extent of the Threatening.

Ther. How could one Act of Disobedience produce such destructive Effects? Erase the fair Image of the GODHEAD; and stamp the Monster, stamp the very Devil, in its Stead?—And so small an Act of Disobedience too!

Ass.

Nor only Tears
Rain'd at their Eyes; but high Winds within
Began to rise; high Passions, Anger, Hate,
Mistrust, Suspicion, Discord, and shook sore
Their inward State of Mind; calm Region once,
And full of Peace; now tost and turbulent!
For, Understanding rul'd not, and the Will
Heard not her Lore! But, in Subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath
Usurping, over sovereign Reason claim'd
Superior Sway.

Ass. The *Prohibition*, if You please, was small; not so the *Transgression*. It was committed against the clearest Knowledge of Duty, and the strongest Obligations to Obedience. It argued Ingratitude for the richest Favours, and Unbelief of the most solemn Declarations. It was an Act of the most horrid Presumption in the Creature, and of the most impious Rebellion against the CREATOR.

As to the Smallness, or rather the *gentle* and *benign* Import of the Command, this aggravates, beyond Measure, the Crime of Disobedience. Alluding to the Words, once addressed to the *Syrian General*, we may justly exhortulate—"O thou *Adam*, "if thy LORD had bid Thee do some great "Thing *; in Submission to his high Authority, "and out of Gratitude for his unspeakable Goodness, oughtest Thou not to have done it? How "much more, when He says to Thee?—Freely eat "of all, except this single Tree. *Thousands, Thou-* "sands of Honours, Privileges, and Gifts be thine; "only *one* Acknowledgment of thy Subjection, "mine. And that the *easiest*, which thy Heart can "wish, or even thy Fancy conceive."

Ass. You ask, *How* could one Act of Disobedience produce such destructive Effects?—I answer; The *Reality* of the Fact, in numberless Instances of material Nature, is plain to a Demonstration; while the *Manner* of Operation, remains an impenetrable Secret. Every Child perceives the former; *Newton* himself is at a loss for the latter.—For which Reason, I have always thought it better, to believe what GOD has taught, than attempt to explain, what GOD has concealed. Let us forego this curious,

* 2 Kings v. 13.

curious, perhaps fruitless Enquiry; and substitute a Remark, which naturally arises from the Subject, and may considerably edify our Minds.

Ther. Edify! Is it possible to render this dishonourable and afflictive Notion *edifying*? Can any generous Fruit spring from such a penurious Soil?

Asp. Samson, I believe, had no Expectation of finding any Thing valuable, in the Reliques of his slain Lion. But, to his agreeable Disappointment, *there was Honey in the Carcase* *. If our Doctrine appear *ghastly* as the One, it may yield a Benefit *sweet* as the Other.

From hence We may learn (what, when rightly learnt, is more serviceable than all the Sciences) the *extreme Malignity* of Sin.—When *Volcanes* open their tremendous Jaws, and disgorge a fiery Inundation; they confine their Fury to a single Territory.—When *Famine* lifts her mildewed Hand, and destroys the Supports of animal Life; She is content with ruining a Kingdom or a Nation.—When *War* drenches his Sword in Blood, or the *Pestilence* impregnates the Air with Poison; they also, even they observe some Limits, and never make the whole Compass of Nature the Scene of their Ravages.—But *Sin* leveled its Blow at the whole human Race. SIN poured Contagion, and spread Destruction, through all Countries, and all Ages. One *single Act* of Sin brought Confusion and a Curse upon the material, and Miseries, infinite Millions of Miseries, on the rational World †.—How then should We fear this

* Judg. xiv. 8.

† *St. Chrysostom* calls the first Transgression, *ἡ πρώτη ἀναστασία*. Which is, in a Manner, translated by

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most horrible and pernicious of all Evils! With what Carefulness guard against its insidious Allurements! With what Resolution fly from its killing Caresses!

Ther. I must observe, *Aspasio*, that You take for granted, what remains to be proved. For, supposing your Account true, with regard to *Adam*; yet, how does this affect his Children? Why must all his Posterity be contaminated, because their Forefather has played the Prodigal? Such a heavy Charge against the whole Body of Mankind will not be admitted, without very cogent Proofs.

Asp. The Proofs are cogent; perhaps irrefragable.

Poetry, addressing fallen *Adam*, is very clear in her Deposition:

————— *They, who never touch'd
Th' excepted Tree, nor with the Snake conspir'd,
Nor sinn'd thy Sin, yet from that Sin derive
Corruption*.*

Reason offers to turn Evidence in the Case. Reason, in Concurrence with Revelation, demands; *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean †?* If the Fountain be polluted, how can the Streams be pure? And if the Root is corrupt, 'tis impossible to

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I

con-

by *Milton*; who, speaking of the same tragical Act, says

————— *It
Brought Death into the World, and all our Woe.*

* MILTON.

† Job xiv. 4.

conceive, how the Branches should be sound, or the Fruit good *.

The scriptural Testimonies are almost innumerable. They pour their Evidence from every Quarter; and constitute, not two or three only, but a whole Cloud of Witnesses.—*GOD made Man upright*, says the royal Preacher. The human Nature in its primitive State, was all Regularity, and without any improper Bias. *But*, ever since the first Transgression, Men have been inclined to Evil. And, in Consequence of this Depravity, *they have sought out many Inventions* †.—Don't You observe the very peculiar, and no less significant, Structure of the Language? *GOD made*, not *He makes*. *Man*, at his first Creation; not *Men*, in their successive Generations. Then *He* was wise and holy; now *they* are foolish and depraved. Our Nature, as proceeding from a gracious CREATOR, was without Fault and without Defect; but as propagated from a fallen Parent, is unhappily altered. *Fuimus Troes*.

Ther. I don't deny, but Multitudes of People, seduced by bad *Example*, or betrayed by their own *Inadvertency*, have departed from the Rule of Duty. Have,

* *Milton* has anticipated *Theron's* Objection; and, in *Adam's Soliloquy*, very judiciously solved it.

————— *Ah! why should all Mankind
For one Man's Fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed
But all corrupt, both Body and Mind deprav'd;
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me! How can they acquitted stand
In Sight of GOD?*

Book X. 822.

† *Eccles. vii. 29.*

Have, as the wise Man affirms, tried many foolish Experiments to acquire Happiness, and devised as many idle Excuses for their Folly. But, this is no such irrefragable Proof, that their very Nature was depraved. It only implies, that, not taking proper heed to their Ways, they warped from their native Uprightness. As yonder *Tulips*, though perfectly beautiful at present, if not attended with the necessary Cultivation, will degenerate into homely Flowers; and, at length, be no better than tawdry Weeds.

Ass. No, my Friend. Iniquity is not an adventitious Thing, caught from Example, or contracted by Carelessness. These may increase, but these do not occasion, the *moral Malady*. A sinful Disposition is early as our Being: is the very Mould, in which all our Faculties are cast.—*David* bears very express Testimony to this humbling Truth. *Behold!* He sets his *N. B.* * upon the Passage. 'Tis a sad, but certain Fact. Such as should never depart from my Memory, nor ever be omitted in my Confessions. *I was shapen in Wickedness, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me* †. As though he had said —“ Alas! LORD, this Crime, though extremely horrid, is but a little Part of my Guilt. I have

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“ not

* I need not inform my Readers, that *N. B.* points out the special Importance of a Passage, and is a Call for peculiar Attention. An Observation of another Kind may, perhaps, be more worthy of their Notice. That *David* sets not the distinguishing Mark upon his actual Transgressions, but upon his original Sin. As that, which was the fatal Source of all; should cause the deepest Humiliation in Himself; and should be most attentively regarded by the Reader.

† Psal. li. 5.

"not only sinned in Practice, but I am totally and
 "universally corrupt in my very Nature."

This He acknowledges, not to extenuate his Offence, but to lay open his excessive Vileness. And indeed it is not possible, to form a *right Judgment* of Ourselves, or to be *duly humbled* before GOD, unless We add the Depravation of our Nature to the Transgressions of our Life. Just as it is impossible to discern, what monstrous and voracious Animals lie hid in the Ocean, if We only glance an Eye upon the Surface of the Waters.

Ther. This, You know, was written by the royal Penitent, under the Pangs of a severe Remorse. Does not a Sense of his enormous Iniquity, together with the Apprehension of divine Wrath, cause his Hand to shake, and lead Him to *aggravate* Features?—Or, suppose it were true of the adulterous King, is it equally applicable to Others, who have escaped such gross Pollutions?

Asp. It is no exaggerating Draught, but a faithful Delineation; and exactly represents every Child of *Adam*.—It was written with the utmost Deliberation; and therefore is introduced with that Call for peculiar Attention, *Behold!*—And, though *David* was scandalously criminal in his Intrigue with the Wife of *Uriah*; yet, the *general* Tenour of his Life was not only irreproachable, but exemplary. Who so zealous for the House of GOD, or so devoted an Admirer of the divine Word? His Heart was an Altar, ever flaming with heavenly Love; and his Tongue a Trumpet, to sound the Praises of *JEHOVAH* through all Generations.—And if *He* had Reason to make this abasing Confession; who

is

is the Person, that can think Himself aggrieved, by sharing in the Imputation?

One of our most eminent Martyrs *, when He heard of any Malefactor, condemned to suffer an ignominious Death, used to lay his Hand upon his Breast, and say—"The Seeds of all those Villanies, which brought that unhappy Wretch to the Gibbet, were sown *Here*. If they have not sprung up into the same detestable Deeds, unto divine Grace, unto divine Grace *alone*, be all the Glory!"

Ther. Your Martyrs had honest Hearts, but not always the clearest Heads. I admire their Zeal, and reverence their Memories. But I can no more receive their Opinion as an Oracle, than I can be persuaded to worship their Relics.

Ass. I have no Intention to palm Popery on my Friend, nor any Desire to calumniate the human Species. If it be disingenuous and sinful, to asperse a particular Character; how much more unjustifiable, to traduce our Nature in general!

My Account, dark and disgustful as it is, stands confirmed by a higher Authority, than any private Opinion. It is confirmed from an universal Survey of Mankind; taken by the Eye of the CREATOR Himself, and left upon Record in the Books of Revelation. *The LORD looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were Any that did understand, and seek after GOD.*—What is the Result of this grand Enquiry? It must, without all Peradventure, be infallibly true. Because GOD's Inspection is too keen, to be eluded; and his Judgment too impartial, to be biased. This is

the Report, made by the infinitely wise OBSERVER: *They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy* *; *there is None that doeth Good, no not One.*

Ther. This, I apprehend, is the Character of those besotted Creatures, those most egregious of all Fools, *Who say, There is no GOD.* To them the *Psalm* relates, and to them the abandoned Character is appropriated. They have it, if I may so speak, *Cum Privilegio.*

Asp. It is meant rather of practical, than of speculative Atheists; who say, if not *explicitly* with their Mouths, yet *implicitly* in their Hearts, There is no GOD. Who live, as if there was no ALL-SEEING EYE, to take Cognizance of their present Conduct; no Supreme JUDGE, to call them to a future Reckoning.—Now I dare appeal to Yourself, though perhaps the fondest of Fathers, Whether this Instance of *Foolishness*, is not bound up in the Hearts of our Children †. Nay, I dare appeal to

* *Psal.* xiv. 2, 3. The two original Words נאֲלִדוּ and נִשְׁכָּחוּ are metaphorical Expressions; taken from—*Wines*, that are become *sour*—and *Meats*, that are in a State of *Putrefaction*. I believe, it is impossible to find Images, more strongly expressive of a *total* Depravity, and of the utmost Degeneracy. Yet both these Images St. Paul has comprehended in one Word; διαφθαρμενων του νου. 1 Tim. vi. 5.

† *Prov.* xxii. 15. Let None think, that by *Foolishness* the sacred Writer means only those *filly* Tricks, which discover a Weakness of Understanding in Children. Solomon's Fool is not the *Idiot*, but the *Sinner*; and the *Folly*, stigmatized throughout the *Proverbs*, denotes, not a Failure in the intellectual, but in the religious and moral Character.

to any unprejudiced Person; Whether it be not natural to Us all, both in Youth and Manhood, to forget our CREATOR?

In this Case, *Theron*, there is no Monopoly. Your Right and mine, are too strongly established by Experience, and too clearly expressed in the preceding Scripture, to admit of any Controversy.—If there were *Any*, that understood—They are *all* gone out of the Way—There is *None*, that doeth Good—No, not *One*.—Could any Conveyancer in *Europe* have contrived a Form of Words, more fully to ascertain our unhappy Title?

Ther. There may be some Texts in Scripture, which seem to countenance your Assertion. But these refer to the worst of Men, in the worst of Times. And can You, with any Justice, ascribe the Properties of a few Reprobates to the whole Species?

Asp. This very Passage, and others of a like Import, are adopted by *St. Paul*, and applied both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; with this professed Design, *that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may be found guilty,* before GOD.* Which evinces, I

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should

The Words, in this Passage, are peculiarly forcible. *Foolishness is in the Heart*; implanted in the very Nature; sunk deep into the inmost Faculties.—And not only sunk deep, but adheres almost inseparably: קשורה is *wrapt, tied, and bound*: twines like the Ivy, and is rooted like the Oak.

* *Rom. iii. 19.* ἵνα ᾖ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὡς ἐν ἡμῶν, “May become guilty,” does not so exactly answer the Scope of the Context, neither does it so solidly establish the Apostle’s Argument, as “may be found guilty;” be fully convicted, and apparently liable to most just Condemnation.—Those Things were written of Old, and were quoted by *St. Paul*, not to render Men criminal, but to *prove* them so.

should think, beyond all Doubt, the *Universality* of its Extent.

If to the *Universality*, We add the *Antiquity* of this Fact, it will bear the two grand Characteristics of Truth. Far from being a novel Opinion, it was received as a Maxim, in the early Age of *Job*. *What is Man, that He should pretend to be clean? And He that is born of a Woman, that He should presume to be righteous?* Righteous before the infinitely JUST and HOLY ONE! Behold! He putteth no Trust in his Saints, though the most exalted of all intelligent Beings. Yea, the Heavens, those brightest Parts of the material Creation, are not clean in his Sight. How much more abominable and filthy is Man*? Who drinketh Iniquity; though lothesome to GOD, and worse than Poison to his own Soul; yet drinketh it like Water; without any Hesitation or the least Fear, with an eager and profuse Delight.

This, You will observe, was alledged in a Dispute, carried on with no small Vehemency. Yet is admitted, on all Hands, as unexceptionably true.—Be pleased also to take Notice, That the Charge is not confined to some very notorious Sinners, but is laid against the whole Body of Mankind. Whatever Figure they may make, each in his own Conceit; they are all described in the Word of GOD—as Beings, insatiably athirst after Evil—from Objects, which We cannot endure to behold; or cannot be-

hold

* *Job* xv. 14, 15, 16. The immaculate Purity of the blessed GOD, and the utter Depravity of fallen Man, are Points of so great Importance in the scriptural System of Divinity, that they are inculcated no less than three Times, within the Compass of this single Book. And by much the same noble Contrast of striking Images. Chap. iv. 17, 18.—xv. 14, 15, 16.—xxv. 4, 5, 6.

hold without Abhorrence *.—*Such* is Man by Nature! People must have Eyes very different from mine, to discern any *Dignity* in this Draught.

Ther. As to innate Dignity, We will let it pass. But this I must insist upon, and several Writers of the first Repute are on my Side—That We enter the Stage of Life, in a State of *Indifference* either to Good or Evil—That the Affections are like a Balance, nicely poised, and preponderating neither one Way nor the other.—The whole Soul, like a Sheet of fair Paper, is equally susceptible of strait or crooked Lines; and will as readily receive the amiable Features of an Angel, as the hideous Deformity of a Devil.

Asp. With regard to your first Illustration.—The Simile, I think, confutes the Sentiment. For, to be in *Suspense*, whether We shall love the LORD our GOD, the Giver of all Good, and the Source of all Perfection; this, surely, must be condemned as an irreligious Temper.—This is a criminal Halting between GOD and *Baal*.—A Neutrality, which is no better than Hostility.

I fear, the Writers You mention, pay but little Deference to the inspired Volume. Our Escutcheon is very differently blazoned, in that Office of spiritual Heraldry. *A Transgressor from the Womb* †, is one of

* The original Words are נִתְעַב וְנִאֲלַח—One is used to signify that *abominable* Practice, which the *Egyptians* could not bear to view. *Exod. viii. ver. 22. Heb. Bib. ver. 26. Engl. Bib.*—The other denotes an Object, too *squalid* to be viewed without loathing.

† *Isai. xlviii. 8.* A Truth so apparent and undeniable, that *Seneca* could not but discern it, though He was

of our hereditary Titles. Transgressors We are, by strong internal Propensity; even before We transgress, in outward Act.

Observe the young *Hawthorn* Plants, which have unfolded their green Leaves, in yonder Nursery; but have scarce learned to spread the gay Blossom. Is there in those Plants an equal Aptitude, to produce the luscious juicy Grape, or their own coarse and husky Berry? By no means. They will (unless grafted with some generous Cyon) certainly, universally, constantly bear the same harsh Fruit, with their parent Tree.—So certainly will the human Mind, if not renewed by the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, branch out into ungodly Tempers, and bring forth wicked Practices.

Ther. The Nobleman, mentioned by *Xenophon**, when overcome by an alluring Temptation, devised for his Excuse the Notion of two Souls; one, that inclined Him to Vice; another, that prompted Him to Virtue. This was a moderate *Caricatura*†, compared with my Friend's. He will allow nothing regular or graceful in the human Heart.—You have metamorphosed the Master-piece of the Creation, into such a deformed Object; as may justly render Him a Terror to Himself. Can there be a grosser Libel upon the CREATOR, or a greater Discouragement to our Fellow-creatures?

Asp.
an unlightened Heathen: could not but acknowledge it, attached as He was to the proud Stoic Sect. *Hac Conditione nati sumus. Animalia obnoxia non paucioribus Animi quam Corporis Morbis.* De Ira. Lib. II. c. 9.

* *Cyropæd.* Lib. VI.
† A Term used by the Italian Painters, to signify a Resemblance horrid or ridiculous.

Asp. If this be a deformed Piece, what will You call the following Description? *GOD saw that the Wickedness of Man was great upon the Earth; and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil continually* *. This, perhaps, may be reckoned a more monstrous Drawing still. Yet it came from *that* Hand, which painted the Canopy of the Skies, and touched all the Pictures of Nature into such inimitable Perfection.

Pray, let us examine the most distinguishing Features in this Draught.—Not barely the Works of his Hand, or the Words of his Tongue, but the *Imaginations of his Heart*, are evil. The Contagion has spread itself through the inner Man. It has tainted the Seat of his Principles, and the Source of his Actions †.—Is there not, You will say, some Mixture of Good? No; they are *only* Evil. There is no hopeful Tendency. Not so much as a little Leaven of Piety; that may have a Chance to diffuse itself, and meliorate the whole Lump.—But are there no lucid Intervals? No happy Moments, when Virtue gains the Ascendency? None: He is only

* Gen. vi. 5.

† The Original is very exact in its Structure, as well as very emphatical in its Meaning.—*לב* The Heart, or grand Principle—*מחשבות* The Thoughts of the Heart, or the various Actings of that Principle—*יצר* The Imagination of the Thoughts, or the Produce and Result of those Actings; namely, Desires and Affections, Counsels and Purposes. Of which, not one, a few only, or the greatest Part, but *all* these are evil.—Somewhat like this, is St. Paul's Analysis of the intellectual Oeconomy; *νε, νομα, λογισμοι*. All which He represents, as in a State of Enmity against *CHRIST*. As Forts or Bulwarks, erected to maintain a Siege, against the Knowledge and Obedience of his Gospel. 2 Cor. x. 5.

only evil continually. The Usurpation of Sin is total, and its Tyranny perpetual.

What I have advanced, therefore, is no Libel upon the CREATOR's Benignity. Because, it is the very Echo of his own Determination.—Neither is it so properly discouraging, as humbling and alarming to our Fellow-creatures.—*Humbling*, to make Us sensible of our Ruin: *Alarming*, to make Us desirous of a Recovery.

Ther. Is not the Description, which You have produced, peculiar to the Men of that wicked Generation? Whose Guilt was as unparalleled, as their Punishment?

Assp. It is applicable both to them and their Successors. The Wisdom of GOD repeats the Charge, and fixes it upon the Race, which survived the Flood*. The Depravity of human Nature continued, nor could the Waters of an universal Deluge purge it away. So deep alas! is the Stain, and so incorrigible the Virulency, of original Corruption; that it will yield to nothing—to nothing will it yield, but to the *Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST*†.

* Gen. viii. 21. Where, I think, the Particle *if* is used in the *adversative*, not the *causal* Signification; and should be rendered *though*, rather than *for*.—Where, it may be pleasing, if not so directly pertinent, to observe; that the Forbearance of the righteous GOD, is ascribed to the great Atonement; typified by Noah's Burnt-offerings, and specified by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians; who probably alludes to this Passage. *The LORD smelled a sweet Savour, and the LORD said in his Heart, I will not again curse the Earth any more for Man's Sake, though the Imagination of Man's Heart be evil from his Youth.* See Eph. v. 2.

† Tit. iii. 5.

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Till this takes place, every Heart of Man must wear the Prophet's stigmatizing Motto, *Deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked.*

Ther. This Passage, I am informed, is not rightly translated; especially, in the *last* Expression. The *Hebrew* Original does not bear so hard upon the human Character, as the *English* Version.

Asp. You allow then, that the Heart is *deceitful*. And of this We have a glaring Proof, in the Conduct of *Hazael*. He thought it impossible, that He should ever perpetrate such horrid Barbarities, as the Prophet foresaw. *Is thy Servant a Dog, that He should do this great Thing *?* Yes, *Hazael*; however Thou mayest imagine Thyself gentle as a Lamb, thou art fierce as a Dog, and savage as a Tyger.—Which was most terribly demonstrated by the Event †.

Suppose, we translate the other Word somewhat more accurately. The little Alteration will be of less Service to your Cause. Instead of desperately wicked, You may, if You please, read *deplorably disordered* ‡. This is the exact Import of the Phrase.—It is a Metaphor, derived from a very distempered Body. In which, the whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart faint. *From the Crown of whose Head,*

to

* 2 Kings viii. 13.

† This self-same *Hazael*, murdered his royal Master, and usurped the Throne of *Syria*; burnt the Cities of *Israel*, and slew their Inhabitants with the Sword; dashed the Infants in Pieces, and ripped up the Women with Child. Thus cruelly did He harass the *Israelites*, till He crushed their Strength; broke their Spirits; ruined their Nation; or, as the sacred Historian speaks most emphatically, *He made them like the Dust by Threshing.*

2 Kings xiii. 7.

‡ Jer. xvii. 9. *WIK*

to the Sole of whose Feet, there is nothing but consuming Disease, and enfeebling Languors *.—The Rules of Civility, 'tis true, may set a specious Varnish on the Conversation. But until Grace, sanctifying Grace administers the Remedy, the most civilized Heart will be only like the pale emaciated Cheek, that is poorly enlivened with Paint.

Ther. What say the Writers of the New Testament? Is not *their* Way of thinking more liberal and benign?—If human Nature wore so *hideous* an Aspect, under the legal Dispensation; since the Coming of our LORD, and the Publishing of his Gospel, One may expect an improved and more pleasing Face of Things.

Asp. Human Nature in every Period of Time, and under every Dispensation of Religion, is still the *same*. It was the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*, who indited the Old Testament, and He cannot vary from Himself, in the Declarations of the New.

I am very much inclined to believe, That all the *bodily* Diseases, which our Divine PHYSICIAN healed, during his Abode on Earth, were so many emblematical Representations of *spiritual* Disorders. Which, like certain Family Distempers, may be said to run in the Blood of all Mankind.—Will you give me leave, *Theron*, to explain myself? I don't like to engross the Discourse. Yet I would willingly enlarge upon this Subject.

Ther. By all means. The Laws of Argument, separate from the Indulgencies of Friendship, give

* *Isai.* i. 6. Agreeable to this Doctrine, and consonant to this Metaphor, is the Confession of our Liturgy, *There is no Health in Us.*

you a Warrant to urge, whatever may support your Cause.—Besides, I shall be glad to hear your Sentiments upon a Point so curious.

Ass. The poor *Leper*, covered with noisome Sores, is the very Picture of a *polluted Sinner*. Was the One, for his contagious Impurities, separated from the Society of his Fellow-citizens? So shall the other, for his abominable Uncleaness, be banished from the beatific Presence: Unless He be cleansed by the Blood, and justified by the Righteousness of *JESUS*.

You pity the Condition of that unhappy Creature, who was born *blind*. His Eyes rolled, but rolled in vain, to find the dawning Ray. Such is the benighted State of the human Mind, till Almighty GOODNESS command the Scales of Ignorance to fall off, and pour heavenly Day through all the intellectual Faculties. Then, and not till then, we begin to know the Holiness, the Justice, the adorable Excellencies of GOD.—We see the sublime Purity of his Law, and the extreme Depravity of our own Hearts.—We are brought acquainted with the transcendent Glories of our REDEEMER's Person, and apprehend that most comfortable Mystery of his Substitution in our Stead. We discern the ineffable Perfection of his Merits, and the divinely rich Freeness of his Grace*. Truths, incomparably more delightful to the Soul, than

* This, and the preceding Particulars, are Lessons of the last Importance in the *Christian School*. The Knowledge of them deserves to be most solicitously sought, both by attentive Contemplation, and by earnest Prayer. For, to know them, is to be *truly wise*; to be influenced by them, is to be *substantially happy*.

than all the delectable Scenes of Creation are to the Sight.

The Paralytic's *enervated* Limbs too truly represent the Impotence of our Nature. Was He unable to grind at a Mill; to run in a Race; or to turn Himself on His Bed? So unable are We, to fight the good Fight of Faith; to exercise the Graces of Christianity; or even to turn Ourselves unto GOD. —Do not *you*, my Friend, experience something of this Inability? For *my* Part, I must lay my Hand on my Breast, and daily, hourly confess, “*The Palsy is Here*. Though not altogether dead in Sin “ (blessed be *CHRIST JESUS*, and his quickening SPIRIT!) yet how languid is my Zeal, “ how enfeebled my Industry, in the great Affair “ of everlasting Salvation!—I would fain believe, “ and with a full Assurance of Faith, the Promises “ of the unchangeable JEHOVAH. But how “ often do I stagger through Unbelief!—I would “ fain love, and with the warmest Gratitude, my “ ever-merciful and most beneficent GOD. But “ Oh! what Coldness benumbs my Affections!— “ I wish to be humble in every Thought; heavenly in all my Desires; and wholly resigned to “ the divine Will. But, alas! my Sufficiency for “ these Things, is like the *flaccid* Sinew, or the “ *withered* Arm.”

It would be endless to particularize all the Maladies, which were Emblems of our Misery, and the Triumphs of our LORD's Power. Let me only remark—That their Bodies were afflicted with a *single* Disorder; our Souls labour under a *Complication* of Evils.—They *felt* their Affliction, and were desirous, importunately desirous, of Relief. We are, till
awakened

awakened from above, insensible of our cursed State and our lost Condition. We add, alas! We add, to all our other Indispositions, a stupifying Lethargy, or an extravagant Delirium.

Ther. Such allegorical Expositions of Scripture are pretty enough. But, I presume, You yourself cannot reckon them *demonstrative*. For my own Part, I must appeal from the Surmises of Fancy, to the Verdict of Reason.

Asp. I cannot think, that the allegorical Sense, when *soberly* introduced, is unworthy our Regard, or without its Weight. However, I have no Design to preclude your Appeal.—Will the avowed, will the reiterated Decision of an Apostle, satisfy my Friend, and be admitted as the Verdict of Reason?—St. Paul has declared of Himself; *in me, that is, in my Flesh*, or unrenewed Nature, *dwelleth no Good* *; no good Temper, nor so much as any good Desire.—Elsewhere he affirms; That the *car-nal Mind*, or unregenerate Soul, *is not subject to the Law of GOD*. Nay, is an Enemy, or rather *En-mity* itself † — against what?—Against Sin? That were a noble Antipathy. — Against the World? That were a laudable Disaffection. — No; but against GOD and his Law. Amazing Perverseness! To be Enmity against GOD; who is boundless Benignity, and consummate Goodness. Enmity against his Law; which is the Transcript of his amiable Perfections, and the faultless Model of all Virtue.

Ther. This, I suppose, is the Character of *Saul* the *Pharisee*, not of *Paul* the Apostle. Descriptive
VOL. II. K of

* Rom. vii. 18.

† Rom. viii. 7.

of his Condition, when He was “ a Blasphemer, “ a Persecutor, and injurious.”

Assp. It relates not to Himself alone, but is applicable to All, who continue in a State of Nature.— The blessed AUTHOR of our Being, speaking of Mankind in general, says; That *He is even Flesh* *: mere Flesh, altogether Flesh, his very Soul, and all its Powers, are wholly enslaved to fleshly Appetites. — The beneficent RESTORER of our Happiness, pronounces the same Sentence, in the very same Words: *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh* †: The Faculties, which Men receive by their natural Birth, have a vitiated Taste, and a carnal Bias. They relish not the refined, the heavenly, the godlike. They incline only to selfish Aims, and groveling Pursuits.— Our SAVI- OUR reinculcates the Admonition, and illustrates it by a very remarkable Allusion. You cannot forget his Answer to a procrastinating Disciple; *Let the Dead bury their Dead* ‡: Intimating, that as many as are unsanctified by the HOLY GHOST, though possessed of an animal, are destitute of the
divine

* *Gen. vi. 3.* The Word *Flesh*, by which the All-wise CREATOR characterizes Man, signifies, in the sacred Writings, whatever is *dishonourable* in itself; *provoking* to GOD; or introductory to the *Ruin* of Man.—The *Works of the Flesh*, are a Compendium of all Iniquity. *Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.*—To *walk after the Flesh*, is the very Reverse of walking in the SPIRIT; diametrically opposite to the divine Law and true Holiness, *Rom. viii. 4.*—To be *carnally minded*, or to have the Influence, the Savour, the Relish of the Flesh (*σπορνμα καρεος*) predominant in our Minds, is the spiritual Death of the Soul; and a Prefage of eternal Death, both in Body and Soul. *Rom. viii. 6.*

† John iii. 6.

‡ Matt. viii. 22.

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divine Life. Are no more able to perform any spiritual and holy Duty, than a pale Corpse in the Coffin, or dry Bones in the Charnel-house, are qualified to transact any secular Business.

St. Paul sets the Seal of Heaven to this momentous Truth, in various Passages of his Epistles. From a Multitude let me select one, and recommend it to your serious Consideration. *You, that were sometime alienated and Enemies*: the *Colossians*, and all Mankind were alienated from the living GOD; had no true Knowledge of Him; and, what is worse, had no sincere Desire after Him. Nay; they were not only Strangers, but Enemies; in a State of Hostility to his holy Nature and heavenly Will.—What can express a greater Degeneracy? Nothing, unless it be the following Clause: *by a Mind intent upon wicked Works* *. A Mind, not only averse from all Good, but passionately prone to all Evil.

Ther. A few picked Passages, of a figurative Import, and artfully clogged by some dextrous Interpretation, may seem to support your Cause.

Asp. Ah! Theron, there is no need to use Sleight of Hand. He that runs, may read this Doctrine in the sacred Authors. It is interwoven with the whole Series of their *historical*, and makes a professed Part of their *practical* Writings.

K 2

What

* *Coloss. i. 21.* Τῇ δὲ ἀνομίᾳ ἐν τοῖς ἐπὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτίαις, *Mente malis Operibus intenta.* A very discerning Critic would thus point, and thus translate the Words. For which Alteration, He assigns the following Reason; *Mens enim dicitur esse in ea Re, quam semper cogitat, ad quam Cupidine fertur & inclinatur.* DAVENANT in loc.—Let the Words be pointed and translated, either in *this* or the *received* Manner, they speak the Language, and confirm the Sentiments, of this whole Dialogue.

What is more common with the inspired Penmen, than to express a profligate Course of Life, *by following our own Imaginations, and walking in our own Ways?* When Immorality and Licentiousness were predominant in *Israel*; knew no Restraints, and kept no Bounds; how does the unerring Historian describe this horrible State of Things? *Every One did that which was right in his own Eyes* *. Nothing can more strongly imply the extreme Depravity of Mankind, than such a Phraseology. Which makes it one and the same Thing, to pursue our *natural Inclinations*, and to act the abandoned Sinner.

St. Jude cannot write a few Lines, but He must touch upon this Subject; must teach this humbling Lesson. *Sensual* †, He says, *not having the SPIRIT*. According to his Estimate, not to be actuated by the Power of Grace, is to remain under the Dominion of Sensuality. If We may credit this Ambassador of *CHRIST*, every Man, while unrenewed by the Divine *SPIRIT*, is governed by Flesh and Sense. Can any Man then pretend to be originally free from the ignoble Influence of Corruption?

St. Paul exempts not Himself, no, nor any of the highest Saints, from the opprobrious Charge: *We all walked according to the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind*. Which Desires in *Us*, as well as in the idolatrous *Heathens*, were base, sordid, and contaminating.

* Judg. xvii. 6.—See also Psal. lxxxi. 12. Eccl. xi. 9. Acts xiv. 16.

† Jude 19. The original Expression is not *Capnivos*, but *ψυχικος*. Which denotes, what some People reckon the Glory of our Nature, the *rational Soul*. Yet those Persons, who have no higher a Principle, are, with all their Accomplishments and Improvements, the very Reverse of *πνευμαλικος*, *spiritual*.

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taminating. Infomuch that We, who are *Jews* by Birth; who are Sons of GOD, by our new Birth; even We were, by *Nature, the Children of Wrath* *; Creatures, in whom GOD could take no Pleasure, and against whom his Wrath was revealed from Heaven. If so, then, doubtless, subject to Depravity, and chargeable with Sin.

Ther. What says St. *James*? You have suppressed, and I had almost forgot, his Testimony; though it is so very pertinent to my Purpose, and so very explicit in my Favour. *Men, who are made after the Similitude of GOD.*—The Similitude of GOD signifies, in the sacred Books, those moral Endowments, which distinguish the Possessor both from the Brute and the Devil. And if Men are made after this Image; if they are created with these Endowments; *where* is your Doctrine of original Sin?

Asp. I began to flatter myself, that your Objections were exhausted. But, since I am mistaken in this Particular, surely it must be as great a Mistake to imagine, that our Apostle would maintain an Opinion, so repugnant to the aforementioned Texts, and so contrary to universal Observation.—Do not You perceive the very Reverse true, with regard to your own *Children*? Why do You address them with such tender Entreaties; with such warm Exhortations; such repeated Arguments? Why do You allure them to Duty by Promises, and deter them from Transgression by Threatenings? Is all this Regimen, all this Discipline, necessary for Creatures, that bear the holy Image of GOD?

K 3

They

* *Eph. ii. 3.* Hoc uno Loco, says BEZA, quasi Fulmine, totus Homo, quantus quantus est, prosternitur. Neque enim Naturam dicit læsam, sed mortuam, per Peccatum; ideoque Iræ obnoxiam.

They *made after the Similitude of GOD!*—Then they have no need of the *renewing* Influences of the HOLY GHOST, in case they live; and no need of the *Atonement* of CHRIST's Blood, in case they die. Would *James*, the LORD's Brother, assert such an egregious Error; as not only opposes a single Article, but undermines the *whole* Constitution of Christianity? Sets aside the Sanctification of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Propitiation of the REDEEMER's Death?—Impossible for Him to assert! Impossible, I should think, for Us to suppose!

St. *James* speaks of a Fact that is *past*: speaks of Men *collectively*, as they were all included in their first Parent. The Passage, I apprehend, should be translated, not, Men that *are*; but, Men that *were** created; whose human Nature was formed.—The Scripture considers *Adam*, as the common Parent of Us all: nay more, considers Us all as existing in our great Progenitor. Which is so far from overthrowing, that it establishes, the Point in Debate. For, if We were all created after the Similitude of GOD, in and with *Adam*; it must follow, that We all fell from our Conformity to GOD, in and with *Adam*. If so—let me for once retort my Friend's

* *Jam. iii. 9.* That this is the precise Signification of the Participle *γεγονώς*, may be gathered from *1 Tim. v. 9.* Where *γεγονώς* is translated *having been*; and must necessarily refer, not to the *present*, but to the *past* Condition of the Widow.—We have a similar Manner of Expression and Representation, *1 Cor. xi. 8.* Which Passage most evidently describes, not the successive Production, but the *first Creation* of the human Species.—All this exactly accords with the divine Declaration, *In the Image of GOD made He Man.* עשה not עשה; *εποίησα* says the Septuagint, not *ποιω*; *did make*, not *does make*.

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Friend's Interrogatory—Where, or in whom, is *not* original Sin?

I am very sure, this Doctrine runs through our *Liturgy*; is an essential Part of our *Articles*; and most strongly delineated in our *Homilies*. Shall I produce some of those Testimonies; which are as clear, as they are copious?

Ther. No more of your Testimonies, good *Aspasio*. Inform me rather, what *Advantage* can accrue from your inculcating, or my adopting such a Doctrine. Suppose, it were undeniably true; disagreeable Truths, like disagreeable Objects, should be consigned over to Obscurity, not obtruded upon our View.—On such an Occasion, the Reply of *Themistocles* should be mine. One of the *Literati* of *Greece*, offered to communicate an elaborate and curious Invention. By means of which, his Memory should be so wonderfully strengthened, as to retain whatever He read or heard. “My Friend, replied the Hero, You quite mistake the Way to serve me. “I want to learn the Art, not of *remembering*, but “of *forgetting*.”

Asp. If to forget our Disease, were a likely Method to *restore* our Health, I should readily concur in your Hero's Way of Thinking. As this will hardly be allowed, I cannot but judge it more advisable, to give some Attention to our Disease, that We may enquire after a Remedy.

Ther. Where is this Remedy to be had?

Asp. Not on Earth, but from Heaven.—The Schools of Science cannot discover it. The Courts of Kings are unable to procure it. The College of Physicians know not how to prescribe it. But the

Gospel of our Salvation prescribes, prepares, and dispenses it. The Language of *CHRIST* in his holy Word is, *I will bring her Health and Cure* *. And the Beginning of our Cure is, to be sensible of our Disorder.

Hence We are taught to be *humble*.—To review the Catalogue of our actual Transgressions, is a mortifying Employ. But that which lays the Soul in the lowest Abasement, is the Conviction of *inbred* Iniquity. This strikes at the Root of human Vanity, and cuts asunder the very Sinews of Self-conceit. A total Loss of Righteousness and true Holiness; an utter Impotency to all Good, and an impetuous Propensity to all Evil; these are not *Visitants*, but † *Inhabitants*; congenial with our Frame, and ingrained in our Constitution. How then—O! how can *We* be vain of our moral Beauty, who have such an hereditary Defilement and Deformity cleaving to all our Faculties? Surely, this must banish the *Pharisee* from our Breast, and inspire Us with the Sentiments of that sincere Penitent, *Behold! I am vile* ‡! Must teach Us the Language of the abashed Leper, *Unclean! Unclean* ||!

Ther. I should think, it would make Us *melancholy*, rather than humble. Serve no other Purpose, than to introduce an afflictive Sense of extreme Wretchedness.

Asp.

* Jer. xxxiii. 6.

† Accordingly, this Corruption is styled, not barely *ἡ παρακείμενη*, that which is *at our Elbow*. Rom. vii. 21. *ἡ εὐπερίστατος*, that which *easily surrounds* Us. Heb. xii. 1. but *ἡ οικουσα*, that which *dwelleth in* Us. Rom. vii. and *ἡ φυλασσουσα*, that which, like a strong Man armed, *keepeth Garrison* in our Souls. Luke xi. 21.

‡ Job xl. 4.

|| Lev. xiii. 45.

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Asp. Did We intend to rest Here, your Apprehensions would be just. But We urge the Doctrine of original Corruption, as a *Preparative* for the Redemption of *CHRIST*.

It is observable, that very Few applied to the blessed *JESUS* in the Days of his Flesh, but the Sons and Daughters of Affliction. The Levee of that *PRINCE* of Peace, was crouded by the Lame, the Blind, the Diseased. These, being sensible of Distress, and longing for Relief, fell as humble Supplicants at his Feet. While Others, who were firm in their Health, and gay in their Spirits, rejected Him with contemptuous Scorn.—When We perceive “the Plague of our Heart,” and feel those worse than ulcerous Sores, which overspread our Nature; We also shall ardently seek to the *LORD* our Healer. When we find Ourselves subject to the Curse of the Law, in Bondage to the Tyranny of Satan, and liable to everlasting Damnation; then the Divine *PHYSICIAN*, and the Divine *REDEEMER* will be precious indeed.—Whereas, if We remain insensible of our Misery, the Gospel, which is *saving Health* to the contrite Soul, will be an unaffecting Story to our Ears. We may hear it, We may read it, as an amusing Narrative; but shall not receive it, as a sovereign Remedy.

Ther. Not receive the Gospel, *Aspasio*! I hardly understand what You mean. I often study the Gospel; I believe it to be a divine Revelation; and endeavour to follow its Directions.—I look upon it, as containing the most refined System of Morality; as enforcing every Virtue, by the strongest Motives; and recommending all, by the most perfect Example.

Asp.

Asp. To which You should add — as revealing that great MEDIATOR, who has fulfilled all Righteousness, to effect our Justification; who has also the Fulness of the SPIRIT, to accomplish our Regeneration. Otherwise, what You mention, is infinitely short of the *Gospel*.—It brings no glad Tidings to fallen Creatures. It administers no Succours to ruined Sinners. It is like writing a correct Copy for the Blind; or setting a laborious Task to the Disabled. Which would rather be an Insult on their Impotence, than a Relief of their Distress.

The first Particular I wave at present. Only let me ask your Opinion of the last; which is a grand Doctrine, and a very distinguishing Privilege of the Gospel. I mean the Doctrine and the Privilege of *spiritual Regeneration*. Exclusive of which, all your Endeavours to possess Virtue and practise Morality, will be no better than Endeavours, to fly without Wings, or to run without Feet.

While unimpressed with a Sense of our original Depravity, We shall probably sit down contented with some *superficial* Reformation, and not aspire after a Renewal of the Heart. *Civility* will pass for Sanctity, and a *temperate* Disposition for a gracious Habit.—Why is the New Birth, why are all the saving Operations of the blessed SPIRIT, disregarded by some, derided by Others? Because, these Persons are insensible of their utter Inability to all Good, and of their abject Slavery to all Evil. Therefore, they see no Reason for *this* divine Agency, or for *that* universal Change.

You also, my dear Friend, while unacquainted with your natural Corruption, cannot apprehend either the Reasonableness or the Necessity, of being

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renewed in the Spirit of your Mind *. But when Experience has taught You the former, You will want no Arguments to convince You of the latter.—Can Creatures, who are *blind* in their Understandings, discern the Things which belong to their eternal Peace?—Can Creatures, who are *dead* in Sin, exercise the Graces, or discharge the Duties, of a Christian Life?—Can Creatures, whose Hearts are at *Enmity* against GOD, either delight to do his Will Here, or be meet for his beatific Presence Hereafter?

Under the Influence of such Convictions; that New Birth, which the Gospel of *CHRIST* promises, which the *SPIRIT* of GOD produces, will appear as necessary for your State, and be as welcome to your Soul, as these gentle *Dews* are necessary for the languishing Herbs, and welcome to the thirsty Soil.

Ther. The Dews, though refreshing to the Flowers, may be too chilly for our Constitutions. And see! The Star of Evening, by proclaiming the Approach of Night, has given Us a Warning to quit our Arbour.—Some other Time We must resume this Enquiry. For I am by no means satisfied, that your Theory agrees with Experience.

Asp. I fear, I have already kept You out too long. Let me just observe, as We go in — That the Doctrine, however disagreeable in itself, is conducted to an *advantageous* Issue. It is productive of a much more substantial Consolation, than History assigns to the great, but exiled *Marius*. When he fled, with his ruined Circumstances, to linger out the poor Remains of Life among the Ruins of *Carthage*,

* Eph. iv. 23.

156 DIALOGUE XI.

thage, what was his chief Support? “Contem-
“plating, says my Author, that famous City in
“the Dust, He was the less afflicted with his own
“Downfal *.”

We have not been put off with such cold Com-
forts, such *negative* Benefits. The Belief of origi-
nal Sin has a Tendency—To make Us *humble*—To
shew Us our *Need* of *CHRIST*—To create in
Us a Hunger and Thirst after the *renewing* Influ-
ences of his *SPIRIT*, and the justifying Merit
of his Righteousness.—So that it must be owing to
our own Perverseness, or our own Negligence, if
We do not levy a *Tax* upon our *Loss*, and *rise* even
by our *Fall*.

* *Inopem Vitam in Tugurio Ruinarum Carthagenensium
toleravit: cum Marius aspiciens Carthaginem, illa intuens
Mariam, alter alteri possent esse Solutio.*

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DIALOGUE XII.

THE Sun was fiercely bright, and the Sky without a Cloud.—Not a Breath fanned the Woods; not a Gale curled the Stream.—The Fields, exposed to all the fiery Beams, were like a glowing Hearth.—The little Birds, overcome by the potent Influence, lost for a while their tuneful Notes. Nothing was heard in the Garden, but the drowsy Hum of Bees, and the Moan-like Buz of winged Insects.—All Nature seemed to *languish*. The flourishing Meads looked sickly; the gayest Blossoms began to fade; the sprightliest Animals, if not reposed under some cooling Shelter, panted for Breath, and hung their drooping Heads, amidst the all-surrounding Blaze and the unsufferable Heat.

Aspasio disappeared since Dinner. None could tell, whither He was gone.—*Theron*, as soon as the Tea-Equipage was removed, took his Way to the Wood. Longing for the thickest Shade, He hastened to the Center. The Avenue consisted of a serpentine Walk. Which, after having presented You with several Species of Plants, and several Degrees

Degrees of Verdure, ends in a large circular Area: not covered with a *Grecian* or *Roman* Temple, unmeaning Imitation of Pagan Idolatry: but surrounded with aged and princely Oaks. The Coalition of whose Branches, threw over the grassy Plat a majestic rural Dome; and their unpierced Foliage, *imbrowned the Noon-tide Hours.*

In the Midst, and elevated on a square Base, was a Statue representing the venerable *Elijah*—in a Posture of Worship—with his Hands stretched out, and Eyes lifted up to Heaven. His Attitude, his Air, his every Feature, were a most lively Comment on those strong energetic Expressions of Scripture; *take hold on GOD* *; *wrestle with the ALMIGHTY* †; *pour out your Hearts before HIM* ‡.—On one Side of the Pedestal, were engraven the Priests of *Baal*; in frantic Emotions calling upon their senseless Deity, and gashing themselves with unavailing Wounds.—On the other was exhibited, in Basso-relievo, the adoring *Tishbite's* Altar; his Victim burning with Fire from the LORD, even while the Water ran from every Limb, and overflowed the Trench below.

A remote Cascade tumbled from a craggy Rock. The very Stream, like its Master, seemed in haste to escape from the intense and raging Heat. With Hurry and Impetuosity, it rushed into this grand Arbour. But here, impressed, as it were, with the unexpected Solemnity of the Scene, it suddenly checked the tumultuous Wave. And, having just saluted, or kissed the skirts of this revered Spot, turned aside into a more sequestered Path. As some heedless

Trifler,

* *Isai. lxiv. 7.*

† *Coloss. iv. 12.* *Ἀγωνίζου ἐν ταῖς ποσὶ σου.*

‡ *Psal. lxii. 8.*

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Trifler, who bolts unawares into the royal Presence, stands struck with Reverence and Awe, or retires with Precipitance and Confusion.

The deep Gloom, shedding a Kind of Night, even while the Sun glared in the Sky—Not a Whisper stirring, among so many Millions of Leaves; and all their warbling Natives hushed in Silence. The sonorous *Toll* of the distant *Cascade*, and the tinkling *Chime* of the nearer Rill—The profound Adoration, and fervent Devotion, which lived in the Lineaments of the impassioned Stone—All these Circumstances rendered the Place peculiarly pensive and august. Not much unlike the antient *Oratories* *; where holy People withdrew from the giddy Ring,

* It is thought by some eminent Critics, that, when our LORD continued all Night *ἐν προσευχῇ* Θεῷ, Luke vi. 12. the Phrase denotes his Continuance in an *Oratory*; a Place set apart for Prayer, Meditation, and a devout Intercourse with GOD.

That there were Places of this Kind among the *Jews*, is indisputable; and that the Opinion is ingenious, cannot be denied. But I very much doubt, whether it gives Us the true Meaning of the Evangelist.—Having mentioned a *Mountain*, it would hardly suit his concise Manner, to be more particular with regard to the Place; neither was the Circumstance so important, as to deserve a second Mention.—I am apt to think also, that *such a Place* would have defeated the Design of our SAVIOUR's Retirement, which seems to have been Privacy; and that *such a Title*, as GOD's Place of Prayer, was wholly appropriated to the Temple.

I apprehend, We shall have a more *defensible*, I am persuaded, We shall have a more *exalted* Sense, if We suppose the Clause to signify—the Copiousness and Fervour of our LORD's Devotion—the vast Importance, and the unequalled Success, of this his prolonged Prayer. All which is expressed, according to the *Hebrew* Idiom, by the Addition of the divine Name. And, so expressed,

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Ring, and the bustling Croud, to ennoble their Minds, with sublime Contemplation. Where, they bid a temporary Adieu to the tumultuous World, its gay Impertinence; in order to maintain a more uninterrupted Communion with that Mighty BEING, who *sitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Grasshoppers before HIM* *.

Welcome to *Theron*, was the shady Bower; welcome the cool Aspect, and the musical Flow of the Water; but more welcome than all, was the Sight of his Friend. Who lay reclined at the Foot of an Oak; with a Book half open in his Hand, and his Eye fixed upon the Statue.

Ther. I know not, *Aspasio*, whether I must make an Apology, for breaking in upon your Retirement; or call You to an Account, for depriving the Ladies of your Company at the Tea-table.

Asp. Indeed, *Theron*, I have been so much delighted with the Place; with the alluring Companion in my Hand; and the commanding Object before me;

is much more emphatical, than any *superlative Degree*, used by the *Greeks* or *Romans*. He continued all Night in the Prayer of GOD.

* *Isai.* xl. 22. What a noble *Image* is here, and what an exquisitely fine *Contrast*! GOD, the great GOD, sitteth on those lofty and immense Heavens, which, at an inconceivable Distance, surround this pensile Globe. From that most sublime and magnificent Throne, he looks down upon the Inhabitants of the Earth. Who—in all their Pomp and Splendor—amidst all their admired Works, and boasted Acquisitions—are *mean* and *impotent* in his Sight. Mean and impotent as the poor Insects, which wander over the parched Heath for Sustenance: which spend all the Day in idle insignificant Chirpings: and, at Night, take up their contemptible Habitation on a Blade of Grass.

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me; that I scarce observed, how the Time stole away. I flatter myself, if You will take a Seat by my Side, and share my Entertainment; You will be more inclined to excuse, than to aggravate my Fault.

Ther. Is *Tully* then (for I observe his Name on the Volume) your alluring Companion? And can such a devoted Admirer of the *Bible*, be so highly charmed with a *Heathen Classic*? — *St. Augustine* somewhere declares, that, though passionately fond, before his Conversion, of *Tully's* Writings; yet, after that memorable Change, He could no longer relish those once admired Compositions; because they were not sweetened, as He expresses Himself, with the *mellifluous* Name of *JESUS*.

Asp. I am far from pretending to such an exalted Pitch of Devotion, as that seraphic Father attained. I can spend a vacant Minute on the delicate Odes of *Horace*; I can taste a refined Entertainment in *Virgil's* beautiful Poem; and not be chagrined, though I find no Mention of my SAVIOUR.— But when I hear a *Sermon*, or peruse a *religious* Treatise, which borrows neither Dignity nor Charms from that amiable and glorious Name, I own myself extremely disappointed. Without the Offices, the Merits, or the Grace of *CHRIST*, the Sermon and the Treatise appear as *defective*, as a Body that is neither adorned with the Head, nor enlivened with the Heart.

Ther. I suppose then You cultivate an Acquaintance with the *Grecian* and *Roman* Authors, in order to improve your Taste, and polish your Style.

Asp. These, and, I am apt to think, more considerable Advantages, may be derived from a proper

Application to their Works. They may serve as so many Shades, to set off, with *heightened* Lustre, the Beauty and Glory of the sacred Oracles.

While I peruse *Plato's* ornamented Page, or listen to *Cicero's* flowing Periods, I am somewhat like the Person, who amuses Himself in a Gallery of *painted* Flowers. He is pleased with the curious Creation of the Pencil. But, finds none of that *delicious* Fragrance, none of those *breathing* Sweets, which meet Him in the Garden, and regale his Sense from the blooming Parterre.—So, here are brilliant Sentiments, and a florid Diction; delicate Touches of Wit, and bold Strokes of Description. But, no Discoveries of *CHRIST JESUS*—no Displays of his ineffable Love—no Overtures of Reconciliation with the blessed GOD. Nothing to yield Us *solid* Comfort, in our present State; or any *joyful* Expectations, with regard to the approaching Eternity.

Besides; when I converse with those celebrated Geniuses of Antiquity, who were at once the most erroneous, and the most judicious—the *most judicious*, in their Taste of polite Literature; the *most erroneous*, in their Apprehensions of invisible Things; they shew me, what they never intended, the inexpressible Need of *Revelation*. They teach me to set a higher Value on that inestimable Gift. I bless the distinguishing Goodness of Providence, which has cast my Lot *, not at *Athens*, but in IMMANUEL's

Land.

* Alluding to the Story of the Philosopher, who used to bless the Gods for three Privileges.—That He was made, not a *Brute*, but a *rational* Creature.—That He was born, not in *barbarous* Climes, but in *Greece*.—That He lived, not in the more *uncultivated* Ages, but in the Time and under the Tuition of *Socrates*.

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Land. I say, with Wonder and Gratitude—"Why did not *my* Existence commence, in those *Æras* of religious Dotage? Why did not my Heritage lie in those Regions of Barbarism and Delusion? Why am not I burning Incense to Idols; paying senseless Adoration to sculptured Stone; or worshipping, with detestable Ceremonies, a Set of lascivious, debauched, and scandalous * Deities?"—Surely, *Theron*, from every Perusal of those Volumes, attended with such a Reflection, We shall see the utmost Reason to magnify the *tender Mercies of our GOD*; whereby the *Day-spring from on high* hath visited Us †, and brought Us out of Darkness into the marvelous Light of the Gospel.

Permit me to mention another Benefit, which may result from an occasional Correspondence with those masterly Writers.—The Streams may lead Us to the inexhaustible Fountain. Lead Us to admire the *only wise GOD* our SAVIOUR, who has given such a shining Vein of Ingenuity to his rational Creatures. As I read their Works, and am

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charmed

* This, I think, gives Us the most deplorable and horrid Idea of the *Blindness* of our fallen Nature. The Heathens, even amidst all the Politeness of their Taste, and notwithstanding their superior Advancement in the fine Arts, were Haters of the true GOD, and robbed Him of his Honour: nay, what is unspeakably worse, they paid it to *Monsters*—Monsters of Lewdness and Treachery, and Vice and Immorality. Egregious, sottish, almost incredible Stupidity! To *worship* those Beings, which deserved universal *Abhorrence*! To *deify* those Characters, which could never be sufficiently *detested*!

And Devils to adore for Deities!

† Luke i. 78.

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charmed with their Beauties, I would frequently reflect—" If the Essays of a finite Mind, and the
 " Compositions of a mortal Pen, yield such *high*
 " *Satisfaction*; what rapturous, what unknown De-
 " light must arise, from an uninterrupted Com-
 " munion with infinite Wisdom? To stand—not
 " at the Feet of *Homer*, and attend the Flights of
 " his elevated Imagination—not in the Presence of
 " *Solomon*, and hear the Dictates of his sagacious
 " Soul * — but, to stand in the Courts of the
 " LORD, and before the Throne of the LAMB.
 " There to contemplate, without any interposing
 " Veil, the Counsels of his unerring Providence;
 " to have the Mysteries of his redeeming Love,
 " laid fully open to our View; and receive the
 " brightest Manifestations of all his amiable, his
 " adorable, his unspeakable Attributes!"

Ther. These are Advantages, truly desirable, and equally obvious. Methinks, it *surprises* me, that I should never so much as propose them; and *grieves* me, that I should so long be deprived of them. A View to such very superior Improvements will, I hope, render my future Intercourse with those favourite Authors, still more agreeable, and abundantly more beneficial.

But let me ask, what Passage was engaging your Attention, this Afternoon?

Asp. The great Orator's Treatise, concerning the *Nature of the Divine BEING* †. That Part especially, which proves his Existence and Perfections, from the Formation of the *human Body*.

Ther.

* *Happy*, says the Queen of *Sheba* to *Solomon*, *are thy Men, and happy are these thy Servants, which stand continually before Thee, and bear thy Wisdom.* 2 Chron. ix. 7.

† *De Natura Deorum.*

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D I A L O G U E XII. 165

Ther. Don't You perceive, that the Orator is almost as deficient, in the Knowledge of his Subject; as he is mistaken, in his Ideas of the Supreme CAUSE?—The exquisite Contrivance and inimitable Workmanship of the human Frame, were, in those early Ages, but dimly discerned. It was the *Infancy* of Anatomy: when the very Professors had scarcely the Qualifications of a modern Pupil. Many of the received Notions, were childish; almost all of them, superficial.

Asp. Will my *Theron* then entertain me with a more accurate Description of this wonderful Structure?

Ther. How could You take occasion, *Aspasio*, from the Hint I dropped, to conceive any such Expectation? It is one Thing to *discover*, another to *correct*, what is amiss. Many Spectators can point out an accidental Defect in some celebrated Statue, or a small Indelicacy in some valuable Piece of Painting; who are absolutely incapable of retouching the One, or supplying the Other. Remember the *Cobler* and *Apelles* *.

Asp.

* As some Persons will be at loss to understand the Meaning of this Hint, a Word or two by Way of Explanation, may, to them at least, not be impertinent.

Apelles was the most masterly Painter in *Greece*, perhaps, in the World. After He had finished any noble Work, He used to expose it, in some Place of Concourse, for general Examination: Himself standing behind a Curtain, and listening to the Remarks, which the Spectators made. When one of his finest Pieces was, in this Manner, exhibited to public View, Multitudes flocked to the curious Spectacle. Among others, came a *Cobler*. Who, taking particular Notice of the Foot, cried out; "Here *Apelles* has blundered. The Strop is too big for the

Asp. I remember the Story, but without relinquishing my Request. No; since We are fallen upon this Point, I cannot, I had almost said, I will not dismiss it, till I am favoured with your Explanations and Remarks.—Especially, as You have made this Branch of Science, a Part of your Amusement; and not without the Advantage of *anatomical Dissections*. Whereas, I have very seldom applied my Thoughts to the former, and never had an Opportunity of being present at the latter.

Let me also observe, that our very Situation favours, or rather suggests such a Topic of Conversation. This deep embowering Shade has drawn a Curtain between Us and the World. All the fine Prospects of the Country are excluded. We have scarce any Thing left, but *Ourselves*, to contemplate. And shall this be the only Theme We neglect?

Ther. It is somewhat preposterous, I must confess, to pry into the Recesses of Libraries; to ransack the Cabinets of the *Virtuosi*; and carry our Search through the whole Compass of external Nature.

Yet

“Shoe.”—Truly, Friend, Thou art right; replied the Artist. There is a Disproportion; and it shall be corrected.—The poor Mechanic, transported with the Honour paid to his Judgment, must needs deliver his Opinion upon other Parts of the Picture.—Hold, says *Apelles*, with a scornful Sneer; *Ne Sutor ultra Crepidam*. That is; “Cobler, keep to thy Last. Here, Thou art a Critic; elsewhere, an Idiot.”

The Sarcasm passed into a *Proverb*; and is very justly applied, When human Reason would brow-beat divine Revelation—When the moral Sense would supplant the Grace of *CHRIST*—When the Righteousness of Works would, in the important Article of Justification, share with or set aside *the Righteousness which is by Faith*.

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D I A L O G U E XII. 167

Yet overlook the far more surprising Curiosities, which abound in the Composition of our own Bodies. The Rarities, the Mysteries, the Miracles, inlaid or locked up in these Cabinets of Flesh and Blood.

Since you insist upon it, my Observations, crude and extemporaneous as they are, shall submit themselves to your Judgment. Provided, You will be content to receive, only a few of the *Outlines*, and nothing like a *finished* Draught.

Asp. Let me just hint, that the more *circumstantial* your Account is, so much the more welcome will it be to your Friend, and so much the more honourable to our common CREATOR. Let me also remind You of *Galen's* Declaration: which, as it is judicious and important, will, I hope, induce You to enlarge your Plan, and give full Scope to your Imagination.—“ Those Treatises, which display the transcendent Excellencies of the great CREATOR, compose one of the noblest and most *acceptable* Hymns. To acquaint Ourselves with his sublime Perfections; and point out to Others his infinite Power, his unerring Wisdom, his boundless Benignity; this is, according to my Opinion, a more *substantial* Act of Devotion, than to slay Hecatombs of Victims at his Altar, or kindle Mountains of Spices into Incense *.”—*Theron*, after pausing a few Minutes, thus resumed the Discourse.

Ther. When some Master-builder undertakes to erect a magnificent Edifice, He begins with the less decorated, but more substantial Parts. Those which

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* Gal. de Ufu Part. Lib. III.

are to *support*, or those which are to *contain* the rest. This Order, if You please, We will follow, in considering “ the earthly House of our Tabernacle *.”

First, You have a System of *Bones*; cast into a Variety of Moulds; enlarged or contracted into a Variety of Sizes. All *strong*, that they may commodiously bear up the Machine; yet *light*, that they may not encumber or clog the Animal. Some *continuous*, and solid throughout. Some *bored* with an internal Cavity, to contain the moistening Marrow; and *perforated* with exceedingly fine Ducts, to admit the nourishing Vessels.—Insensible themselves, they are *covered* with a Membrane † of exquisite Sensibility. Which warns them of the Approach, and secures them from the Annoyance, of any injurious Friction. At the same Time, it preserves the adjoining muscular Parts, from being fretted in their Action, by the hard and rough Substance of the Bones.—Their *Figures* are always most precisely fitted to their Uses. They are generally larger at the Extremities, than in the Middle; that they may

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* 2 Cor. v. 1. St. Paul very pertinently compares the bodily Structure to a *House*. And adds, in that Strain of godly Edifying, which runs through all his Writings, our *earthly and tent-like Habitation*, *ἐπίγειος οὐρανό τε ὕμνος*. Referring to its *mean Original*, as it was formed out of the Dust; and to its *short Continuance*, as it must soon return to Dust again. Being, though commodious as a House, yet transitory as a Tent: not like the *everlasting Mountains*, which stand fixed and rooted to the Center; but like those *portable Tenements*, which are set up in the Evening, are taken down in the Morning, and then their Place is known no more.—The Word *Booth*, would give a more clear and exact Idea to the *English* Reader, than *Tabernacle*.

† The *Periostrum*.

be joined more firmly, and not so easily dislocated. —The Manner of their *Articulation* is truly admirable *, and remarkably various: yet never varied, without demonstrating some wise Design, and answering some valuable End. Frequently, when two are united, the one is nicely rounded, and capped with a smooth Substance; the other is scooped into a Hollow of the same Dimensions, to receive the polished Knob; and both are lubricated with an unctuous Fluid, to yield the readiest Rotation in the Socket.

The *Feet* compose the firmest and neatest Pedestal: infinitely beyond all that Statuary or Architecture can accomplish; capable of altering its Form, and extending its Size, as different Circumstances require. Besides performing the Office of a Pedestal, they contain a Set of the nicest Springs; which place the Body in a Variety of graceful Attitudes, and qualify it for a Multiplicity of advantageous Motions. For the decent Step, and the stately Stride; the Dance which swims, and the Race We run.—The undermost Part of the Heel, and the Extremity of the Sole, are shod with a tough, insensible, sinewy Substance. This We may call, a Kind of *natural Sandal*. It never wears out; never wants Repair; and always prevents that undue Compression of the Vessels, which the Weight of the Body, in walking or standing, might otherwise occasion.—The *Legs* and *Thighs*, are like substantial and stately Columns †; articulated in such a Manner,

* *Mirabiles Commisuras habent.*

CIC.

† Styled therefore by the sacred Philosopher, *The strong Men*, Eccles. xii. 3. And compared, by the same beautiful

ner, that they administer most commodiously to the Act of Walking, yet obstruct not the easy Posture of Sitting. The Legs swell out, towards the Top, with a genteel Projection; and are wrought off, towards the Bottom, with neat Diminutions. Which Variation lessens their Bulk, at the same Time that it increases their Beauty.

The *Ribs*, turned into a regular Arch, are gently moveable, for the Act of Respiration. They form a secure Lodgment for the Lungs and the Heart: which, being some of the most distinguished and important Organs of Life, have their Residence fortified by this strong semicircular Rampart *.—The *Backbone* is intended, not only to strengthen the Body, and sustain its most capacious Store-rooms; but also to bring down that Communication of the Brain, which is usually termed the *spinal Marrow*. As an open Channel, it conveys, as a well-closed

Cafe,

beautiful Writer, to *Pillars of Marble*, Cant v. 15.—As these are the strongest Parts of the Body, and the Support of all the other, hence, I presume, arose that *proverbial Expression*, which occurs in the History of *Samson*, שוק על ירך Judg. xv. 8. Rendered by the *Septuagint*, not very exactly, *καταμυον επι μορον*; by our *English Translators*, rather too vulgarly, as well as somewhat inaccurately, *Hip and Thigh*. I believe, the Word שוק signifies Here, as it certainly signifies in many other Places, what the *Latins* call *Armus*. And that the Image is taken from some robust and fierce Animal, whose *Shoulders* before, and whose *Thighs* behind, are broken in Pieces. Then, what Mischief can He do? What Resistance can He make? He is utterly disabled. So that the Expression seems to denote (and might perhaps, without Violence to the Original, be translated) *A total Overthrow*.

* *Thou hast fenced me*, secured my inward and vital Parts, with *Bones and Sinews*, Job x. 11.—*Crates Pectoris*, is *Virgil's Expression*.

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Case, it guards this vital Silver *; and, by several commodious Outlets, transmits the animating Treasure into all the inferior Parts. Was it only large, strait, and hollow, it might have served these several Purposes. But then the Loins must have been inflexible, and every Man impaled (not by the Executioner, but by Nature) on a Stake co-eval with his Existence. To avoid which, it consists of very short Bones, closely knit together by intervening Cartilages. This Peculiarity of Structure prevents Dislocation; and gives the main Pillar of our Frame the *Pliancy* of an *Osier*, even while it retains the *Firmness* of an *Oak*.—By this Means, it is a Kind of continued Joint; capable of various Inflections, without bruising the soft medullary Substance, which fills its Cavity; without intercepting the nervous Fluid, which is to be detached from this grand Reservoir; or diminishing that Strength, which is necessary to support all the upper Stories.—A Formation so very peculiar in any other of the Solids, must have been attended with great Inconveniences. Here, it is unspeakably serviceable. Is, both for Workmanship and Situation, a Master-piece of creating Skill, never enough to be admired.

The *Arms*, pendent on either Side, are exactly proportioned to each other; that the Equilibrium of the Structure may not be disconcerted: These, being the Guards which defend †, and the Ministers which serve the whole Body, are fitted for the most
diver-

* This is supposed to be the Part, which *Solomon* describes by *The silver Cord*: and is indeed like a Cord, on Account of its *Shape*; like Silver, on Account of its *Colour*. Eccles. xii. 6.

† Called, in *Solomon's* figurative but elegant Sketch of Anatomy, *The Keepers of the House*, Eccles. xii. 3.

diversified and *extensive* Operations. Firm with Bone, yet not weighty with Flesh; and capable of performing, with singular Expedition and Ease, all Manner of useful Motions. They bend inwards, and turn outwards, they rise upwards, and stoop downwards; they wheel about, and throw themselves into whatever Direction We please.—To these are annexed the *Hands*; and all terminated by the *Fingers*. Which are, not like the Arms, of the same Length, and of an equal Bigness; but in both Respects different. Which gives them a more graceful Appearance, and a much greater Degree of Usefulness. Were they all Flesh, they would be *comparatively* impotent: were they one entire Bone, they would be *utterly inflexible*. But consisting of various little Bones, and a Multitude of Muscles, what Shape can they not assume? What Service can they not perform?—Being placed at the End of the Arm, the Sphere of their Action is exceedingly enlarged. This advantageous Situation realizes the Fable of *Briareus*; and renders a Pair of Hands, as serviceable as an Hundred.—The Extremities of the Fingers, are an Assemblage of tendonous Fibres, most acutely sensible *. Which, notwithstanding the Delicacy of their

* So very acute is the Sensibility of these Parts, that, I am informed, it furnishes the *Tribunal of Inquisition*, with one of the most refined Expedients in the *Art of Torture*. A strong Quill, sharpened by the Pen-knife, and dipped in some inflammable Liquor, is thrust deep between the Nail and the Finger. When the Quill has cut its Way through the shivering Nerves; and stands planted, like a Dagger, amidst the gushing Blood; some barbarous Hand sets Fire to the Extremity. The keen Point, the slow Flame, and both in the Seat of the most lively Sensation, put the miserable Sufferer to the *most excruciating* Pain.

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their Texture, are destined to almost incessant Employ, and frequently exercised among rugged Objects. For this Reason, they are overlaid with the *Nails*, a Sort of horny Expansion: which, like a Ferule, hinders the Flesh from being ungracefully flattened; and, like a Sheath *, preserves the tender Parts from injurious Impressions.

In the Ministry of the Hands, and Activity of the Fingers, We possess a Case of the *finest Instruments*, or a Collection of the *noblest Utensils*. Qualifying Us for the Execution of every Work, which the projecting Genius can devise, or the lavish Fancy crave.—To these We are obliged for the beautiful Statues, which have often entertained our Eyes, in yonder solitary Walks; and even for that melodious Trumpet, which now addresses our Ears, from the Summer-house on the Fish-pond.—These raise the lofty Column, and turn the spacious Arch. These swell the majestic Dome, and adjust the commodious Apartment. Architecture, with all her striking Beauties, and all her rich Benefits, are the Creation of the human Hand.—Yielding to the Strength of the Hand, the tallest Firs fall to the Ground, and the largest Oaks descend from the Mountains. Fashioned by the Dexterity of the Hand, they accommodate the Sailor with a *floating Warehouse*; and circulate, from *Britain to Japan*, the Productions of Nature, and the Improvements of Art.—Obedient to the human Hand, Metals ascend from their subterraneous Beds; and compose the most substantial Parts of that *curious Machine* †, which transmits far and near, to the Monarch's Palace, and to the Peasant's Hut,

such

* *Digitis Munimina.*

† The Printing-press.

such Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, as the *Gold and Crystal cannot equal* *.

Among the *Egyptians*, the Hand was the Symbol of Strength: among the *Romans*, it was an Emblem of Fidelity: and I think, it may, among all Nations, be looked upon as the Ensign of *Authority*. It is the original and the universal Sceptre; that which not only represents, but ascertains our Dominion, over all the Elements, and over every Creature.— Though Providence has not given Us the Strength of the Horse, the Swiftnefs of the Greyhound †, or the

* Job xxviii. 17.

† I once heard a Gentleman, famous for his philosophical Abilities, censure the Formation of the human Body; because it is not so commodiously fitted for *Swiftnefs*, as the Bodies of some other Animals. But I think this Objector's Sagacity, notwithstanding his great Reputation, was no more to be admired than his Modesty.

His *Modesty*, it is certain, was none of the most eminent. Because, it presumed to dispute the Propriety, or rather to deny the Truth of that grand Encomium, which OMNISCIENCE itself pronounced on the Works of Creation; *Behold! they are good; all good; all very good.*—Neither was his *Sagacity* the most extraordinary. Because, it found Fault with a magnificent Monarch, for not breeding up the young Prince to the Business of a Running-footman. Shall the royal Heir be set to perform this Drudgery of the Heels? Shall He not rather command and enjoy the Performance of it from his Vassals?

This Objection is no less *stale*, than *four*. It was made in St. *Chrysostom's* Time, and is very judiciously answered by his Pen. The learned Reader, I hope, will not be displeased, to peruse the Passage in the Original; and the Unlearned, I promise myself, will allow me the Honour of being his Interpreter.

Τὸ δηλοῦν ἡ βασιλεὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐστὶν ὁ ἀνθρώπος, καὶ ῥωμὴ καὶ ἀξιοῦν καὶ ταχὺ πολλὰ τῶν ζῶων αὐτὴ πλεονεκτεῖ; καὶ γὰρ ταχυτέρῳ ἵππῳ ἀνθρώπων, καὶ τληνικώτερον βεῖς, καὶ καφώτερον αἶλος, καὶ

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the sagacious Scent of the Spaniel ; yet, directed by the Understanding, and enabled by the Hand, We can

ισχυροτερον λαων.—Τις γν αν ειπομεν προς ταυτα ; ος και ενλευθεν
μαλιστα εισομεθα τε Θεω την Σοφίαν, και την τιμην, ην ημας ελιμνησεν
ταχυτερον μεν ιππος ανθρωπου, αλλ' εις αποδημιας ταχος επιηδειοτε-
ρον ανθρωπου ιππου· ιππος μεν γαρ καν απαντων οξυτατος και αλκιμω-
τατος η, μολις διακοσιως δραμιλαι της ημερας γαδιως· ανθρωπος δε
υποξυξας ιππους εκ διαδοχης πολλας, και δυσχιλιως δυνησεται γαδιως
διανυσαι· ως οπερ εκεινω το ταχος, τελω ο λογισμος και η τεχνη
παρισχημια ωλειονος της υπερβολης. Ανδρ. ια.

If Man is, as your religious Folks pretend, Lord of the irrational Creation ; how comes it to pass, that many Animals exceed Him in Vigour, in Speed, and other bodily Endowments ? The Horse is swifter, and the Ox more robust ; the Eagle soars to greater Heights, and the Lion possesses superiour Strength.—How shall We reply to such Cavils ? We will more than confute them. They shall serve as an Argument, to prove the unsearchable Wisdom of the CREATOR ; and as a Topic, to display the honourable Regard, which He hath shewn to Mankind. We allow, that the Horse is swifter than his Master. Yet, with all his Swiftness, He is not able to take such long Journies, or to perform them so expeditiously. A Horse, be He the fleetest and strongest of the Kind, will hardly hold out, to go fourscore Miles in a Day. Whereas Man, by taking several Changes of Horses for his Saddle, or several Sets of Horses for his Chaise, will travel, in the same Time, a greater Number of Miles. Therefore, what the vigorous Sinew and the nimble Foot are to the Horse ; that, and abundantly more, the contriving Head and the executing Hand are to Man.

Let me add the eloquent Preacher's Expostulation. Which is pertinent and spirited ; and not the worse, for a Spice of wholesome Invective ; mingled with a Spark of decent Indignation. Όταν εν ο δεσποτης, ο απο τε μη ολος εις το ιναι παραβων, καλα και παυυ καλα τα δημιουργημα προσειποι, τις αν τολησσει, καν αυτομανας η πεπληρωμενος, διαραι το σωμα και ανηφθεισθαι τοις υπο τε Θεω γηδειςιν ; Since then the CREATOR himself has pronounced all his Works to be consummately good ; who shall dare to controvert his Judgment, or detract from their Excellency ? This were an Excess of Arrogance, little short of Madness !

176 DIALOGUE XII.

can subject them to our Will; turn them to our Advantage; and, in this Sense, make them all *our own*.—These Hands (surprising to relate!) these *short* Hands have found out a Way, whereby they can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can penetrate the Bowels of the Earth; and reach from Shore to Shore. These *feeble* Hands can manage the Wings of the Wind; can arm themselves with the Rage of the Fire; and press into their Service the forcible Impetuosity of the Waters.—How eminent is the Dignity! How extensive the Agency of the Hand! It would require more Eloquence, than your Orator possessed, to display the former; and more Pages, than your Book contains, to describe the latter.—How greatly then are We indebted to our indulgent CREATOR, for accommodating Us with this most useful, this most distinguishing, this invaluable Member!

Above all, is the *Head*; a majestic Dome, elevated on the Neck, and designed for the Residence of the Brain. It is framed in exact Conformity to this important Purpose; ample, to receive; strong, to uphold; and firm, to defend, what is the Origin of all our Sense and all our Motion.—As the Head resembles the *General's* Tent in an Army, or the *Monarch's* Palace in a City; it has a Communication established with all, even the most inferior and remote, Parts of the System! It has Outlets and Avenues, for the ready Dispatch of Couriers to all

Quar-

Galen, if I remember aright, allowed *Epicurus* an hundred Years, to find out a more commodious Shape, Situation, or Texture, for any one Part of the human Body. And I believe, if all the Angels in Heaven had studied to this Day, they could not have given a fairer or a more correct Edition of this living Volume.

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Quarters; and for the Reception of speedy Intelligence, on every interesting Occasion. It is furnished with Lodgments, wherein to post Centinels of various Characters, and appointed for various Offices.—To expedite their Operations, whether they are employed in reconnoitring what passes *without*, or examining what claims Admittance *within*; the whole turns upon a curious Pivot, most nicely contrived, to afford the largest and freest Circumvolutions.

This stately Capital, is screened from Heat; defended from Cold; and very much beautified, by a copious Growth of *Hair*. Which flows down from the parted Forelock in decent Curls; and hangs, mantling on the Checks, clustering on the Shoulders.—A Decoration *, incomparably more *delicate*, than any or all the Orders of Architecture know how to compose; and so perfectly *light*, that it no way encumbers, nor any way incommodes the Wearer.

VOL. II.

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While

* *Absalom's* Hair was reckoned a distinguishing Part of his Beauty, 2 Sam. xiv. 26.—The Amiableness of the Church, in the exemplary Conversation of true Believers, is displayed by the same Ornament. *Thy Hair is as a Flock of Goats, that are seen afar off, and appear in a pendent Attitude from the Summit of Mount Gilead*; most agreeably adorning the Place, and detaining the Spectator's Eye. Cant. iv. 1. I prefer the Exposition of *Arias Montanus*, שְׂבִילָיו *quæ pendent, quæ prominent*. As it takes in a Circumstance, which corresponds with the *pensile* Position of the Hair; renders the Comparison more *full* and *exact*; and is, according to the Observation of a most accurate Judge, one of the chief *Remarkables* in such a Prospect:

*Non ego vos posthac, viridi projectus in Antro,
Dumosâ pendere procul de Rupe videbo.* VIRG.

While many Animals creep on the Ground: while all of them are prone in their Posture, or their Aspect: the Attitude of Man is *erect* *.—Which is by far the most *graceful*; has an Air of Dignity, and bespeaks Superiority, and is suited to the Post of Command.—It is by far the most *commodious*; enables Us to survey the Universe, and contemplate the Heavens; fits Us for the Prosecution of every grand Scheme, and facilitates the Success of all our extensive Designs.—It is likewise attended with the greatest *Safety*; being, if not less than any other Position exposed to Dangers, yet more happily contrived to repel or avoid them.

Asp. May it not likewise remind Us of our exalted Original, and our sublime End? Our *Original*, which was the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, and the Spirit of the MOST HIGH. Our *End*, which is not, the Soil We tread on, or any of its low Productions, but the Heaven of Heavens, and the *Things that are above*.

But not to divert from our Subject; which, in my Friend's Manner of handling it, is as entertaining as it is instructive.—The Bones (to carry on your own Allusion) are only the *Rafters*, the *Beams*, the *Shell* of the living Edifice. You have raised the Walls, and laid the Floors. You have made the proper Divisions, and left the necessary Apertures. But, in every finished House, the Roof is covered, and the Rooms are wainscoted. The Sashes are hung, and the Doors turn upon their Hinges. The

Grates

* Two of far nobler Shape, *erect* and tall,
Godlike erect! With native Honour clad,
In naked Majesty, seem'd Lords of all.

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Grates are fixed, and the Stairs ascend. *Within*, the Lodgings are furnished; *without*, the Front is ornamented. All is rendered commodious for domestic Use, and graceful to the external View.

Ther. This likewise is executed by the sovereign, the Divine ARTIFICER *.—Here are *Ligaments*; a tough and strong Arrangement of Fibres; to unite the several Limbs; and render, what would otherwise be a disjointed unwieldy Jumble, a well-compacted and self-manageable System. — *Membranes*; or thin and flexile Tunicles; appointed to enwrap the fleshy Parts; to form a Connection between some, and make a Separation between others †.

Arteries, the Rivers of our little World ‡, or the Aqueducts of the organized Metropolis. Some of which ascend to the Head: others spread themselves over the Shoulders: some extend to the Arms: some descend to the Feet: and striking out, as they go, into numberless smaller Canals, visit the Streets, the Alleys, and every *individual* Apartment of the vital City.—These, being wide at their Origin, and lessening as they branch themselves, check the rapid Impetus of the Blood. To sustain this Shock, they are endued with uncommon Strength: by performing

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* Ο ἀριστοτέλης Θεός.

† The Intestines are *fastened* to each other by the *Mesentery*. The Breast is *divided* into two Cavities by the *Mediastinum*. Both which are reckoned among the *Membranes*.

‡ A human Body was called by the Antients, The *Microcosm*; that is, The World in Miniature. An Abridgment or Epitome, of all that is convenient and useful, of all that is elegant and majestic, in the whole System of created Things.

ing this Service, they oblige the crimson Current to pass into the *narrowest Defiles*, and distribute itself into all Quarters.—The Blood, thrown from the Heart, dilates the Arteries, and their own elastic Force contracts them. By which Means, they *vibrate*, in proper Places, very perceivably against the Finger; bring Advices of the utmost Importance to the Physician; and very much assist Him, both in discovering the Nature of Diseases, and prescribing for their respective Cures.—The larger Arteries, where-ever the Body is formed for Incubation, are situate on the *bending Side*: left, being stretched to an improper Length by the Inflection, their Dimensions should be lessened, and the circulating Fluid retarded.—They are not, like several of the considerable Veins, laid so near the Surface, as to be protrusive of the Skin; but are deposited to a *proper Depth* in the Flesh. And, generally speaking, the larger their Size, the deeper is their Situation. Which renders them more secure from external Accidents; and enables them, like a main Pipe lodged in the Center of a Street, to transmit their smaller Ducts, more easily and more speedily, to the Extremity of their several Spheres. This Situation conceals likewise those Starts and Refolutions of the Pulse, which, if apparent, would discompose the most sedate, and disfigure the most comely Countenance.—Could We cast our Eye upon the River, which runs through the neighbouring Meadow, We might observe several Mills intersecting the Stream. The Waters at those Places, if not entirely stopped, drain away very slowly. In Consequence of this Obstruction, the lower Channels would be sunk dry, and the upper

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Ones swelled into a Flood. To obviate both these Inconveniencies, *Low-shots* are provided: which, carrying off the Surcharge, prevent a Glut above, and supply the Banks below. In those Parts of the Body, which are most liable to Pressure, much the same Expedient takes place. The Arteries *inofculate*; or, breaking into a new Track, they fetch a little Circuit, in order to return and communicate again with the main Road. So that, if any Obstacle blocks up or straitens the direct Passage; the Current, by diverting to this new Channel, eludes the Impediment; maintains an uninterrupted Flow; and soon regains its wonted Course.

Veins are appointed to receive the Blood from the Arteries, and reconvey it to the Heart.—Small at their Rise, and enlarging as they advance, they are void of any Pulsation. In these, the Pressure of the circulating Fluid, is not near so forcible as in the arterial Tubes: for which Reason, their Texture is considerably slighter. Such an exact *Oeconomist* is Nature, even amidst all her *Liberality* *!—In many of these Canals, the Current, though widening continually, and acquiring a proportionable Increase of Gravity, is obliged to push its Way against the Perpendicular. By which Circumstance, it is exposed to the Hazard of falling back, and overloading the Vessels; if not of suppressing the animal Motion. For a Security against this Danger, *Valves* are interposed at proper Distances. Which are no Hindrance to the regular Passage, but prevent the

M 3 * Reflux;

* A parallel Instance of Frugality is observable in the Arteries. Whose Coats are spun *thinner*, as the Diameter of the Vessels becomes *smaller*, and the Pressure of the Blood *weaker*.

Reflux; sustain the augmented Weight; and facilitate a Progress to the grand Receptacle. This auxiliary Contrivance comes in, where the Blood is constrained to climb; but is dismissed where the steep Ascent ceases, and such a Precaution would be needless.

Here are *Glands*, whose Office it is, to filtrate the passing Fluid. Each of these Glands is an Assemblage of Vessels, complicated and intervolved, with seeming Confusion, but with perfect Regularity. As some Kind of Sieves transmit the Dust, and retain the Corn; others bolt out the Meal, and hold back the Bran; so, some of these glandulous Strainers draw off the finest, others the grossest Parts of the Blood. Some, like the Distiller's Alembic, *sublimate* *; others, like the common Sewers, *defæcate* †. Each forms a Secretion, far more curious than the most admired Operations of Chemistry; while all are necessary for the Support of Life, or conducive to the Comfort of the Animal.—*Muscles*, wove in Nature's nicest Loom; composed of the slenderest Fibres, yet endued with incredible Strength; fashioned after a Variety of Patterns, but all in the highest Taste for Elegance, Convenience, and Usefulness.—These, with their *Tendons* annexed,

* The glandulous Substance of the *Brain*; which secretes the animal Spirits.

† The *Liver* and *Kidneys*. The former of which separates the *Gall*. The latter drains off a *Fluid*, which, being sufficiently known, need not be named. I could wish, it had not been so explicitly and coarsely mentioned, in our Translation of the best of Books. But that We had rendered the Original in 1 *Kings* xiv. 10. *Every Male*; in *Isai*. xxxvi. 12. *Eat and drink their own Excrements*.

annexed, constitute the Instruments of Motion. The former, contracting their Substance, operate like the Pulley in Mechanics. The latter, resembling the Cord, are fastened to a Bone, or some Partition of Flesh: and, following the muscular Contraction, actuate the Part into which they are inserted. This, and all their Functions they execute, not like a sluggish Beast of Burden, but quick as the Lightning.—*Nerves*, very minute Tubes; derived from the Brain, and permeated by an exquisitely subtle Fluid. Which, gliding into the Muscles, sets them on work; diffuses the Power of Sensation through the Body; or, returning upon any Impression from without, gives all needful Intelligence to the Soul.—*Vesicles*, distended with an unctuous Matter; in some Places, compose a soft Cushion * for Nature; in other Places, they fill up her Vacuities, and smooth her Inequalities. *Inwardly*, they supply the several Movements of the active Machine. *Outwardly*, they render its Appearance plump, well proportioned, and graceful.

It is said of the virtuous Woman; *She is not afraid of the Snow for her Household; for all her Household are clothed with Scarlet †; or, as We read in the Margin, with double Garments ‡.* Whether the admitted
or

* The *Calf* of the *Leg*, for Instance. Whose large Collection of Muscles, intermingled with Fat, is of singular Service to those important Bones. It flanks and fortifies them, like a *strong Bastion*. It supports and cherishes them, like a *soft Pillow*. What is no less pleasing to observe, it accommodates and defends them on that very Side, where they most frequently rest their Weight, and where they are least capable of being guarded by the Eye.

† Prov. xxxi. 21.

‡ See Gen. vi. 19, 20. Where the Word עֵשֶׂת occurs
M 4 in

or the ejected Translation is best, I am not a competent Judge. But that the ever-bountiful GOD has, in this most warm, comfortable, and secure Manner, clothed our vital Parts, is an undoubted Fact. One of the two Garments, the *Flesh*, has already been examined. Another, the *Skin* *, is still to be considered. This is a Kind of Surtout, exactly fitted, and superinduced over the Whole. Like our LORD's Vesture, it is *without Seam, from the Top throughout*. It consists of the most delicate Net-work; whose Meshes † are minute, and whose Threads are ‡ multiplied, even to a Prodigy. — The Meshes so *minute*, that nothing passes them, which

in this Signification. Which may, in the Place quoted above, not improperly be rendered, *with Pairs* or *with two Suits*.

* There are two Coats of Skin on the human Flesh. Though *Theron* seems to take Notice of one only; or else to comprise them both in one Representation. The outermost is styled *Cuticula*, or the *Scarf-skin*. The innermost, called *Cutis*, is the true and proper Skin. The first is that soft whitish Tegument, which rises in the Pustule of a Blister. The other is that reddish and very tender Part, which appears, when the Blister is broke, and the dead Skin taken off. The former is totally void of Sense; and very happily provided to screen the latter. Screen it not only from the Stroke of Injuries, but even from the Impressions of the Air. Which, mild as it may seem to the *sheathed*, would be too rough and sharp for the *naked Nerves*.

There seems to be an Allusion to this Particular, in that remarkable Expression, *Skin for Skin*, עור בעד עור *Job ii. 4. Skin even unto Skin*; the very inmost Skin, which cannot be taken away, without the greatest Loss, and severest Pain. Yet, even this *Loss* a Man would suffer, this *Pain* He would endure, in order to preserve precious Life.

† The Pores of the *Cuticula*.

‡ The nervous Fibres, and other Vessels of the *Cutis*.

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which is discernable by the Eye; though they discharge, every Moment, Myriads and Myriads of superfluous Incumbrances from the Body. The Steam, arising from the warm Business transacted within, is carried off by these real, though imperceptible Funnel^s *. This Evacuation constitutes, what We usually call, *insensible Perspiration*.—The Threads so multiplied, that neither the Point of the smallest Needle, nor the incomparably nicer Spear of a Gnat, nor even the invifible Lancet of a Flea, can pierce any fingle Part, without caufing an uneasy Senfation and a Suffufion of Blood: confequently, without wounding, even by fo fmall a Puncture, both a Nerve and a Vein †.

The Veins, either pervading, or lying parallel with, this fine transparent Coat, *beautify* the human Structure; thofe Parts efpecially, which are moft conspicuous, and intended for public View. The pliant Wrift, and the taper Arm, they variegate with an Inlay of living Sapphire. They fpread
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* These are fomewhere prettily ftyled, *cutaneous Chimnies*; and no Wonder they are imperceptible, if, as Mr. *Leuwenhoeck* affirms, a fingle Grain of Sand will cover no lefs than 125,000.

† A *Blood-veffel* at leaft. Compared with thefe Veffels, the fine *filmy Threads*, which, on fome bright autumnal Morning, float in the Air, or hang on the Stubble, muft be large as a Bell-rope, or bulky as a Cable.—Such Tubes, One would think, fhould *burft* at every Breath We draw, or even *break* with their own Finenefs. Yet, they are the Conduit-pipes, which convey the vital Fluid from and to the grand Refervoir. And fo admirable is their Texture, that they will out-laft the Strength of Lead, or the Heart of Oak: *theſe* wearing away, *thoſe* growing ftronger, by Uſe.

Vermillion over the Lips *, and plant Roses in the Cheeks. While the Eye, tinged with glossy Jet, or sparkling with the Blue of Heaven, is fixed in an Orb of polished Crystal †. Infomuch that the earthly Tabernacle exhibits the nicest Proportions, and displays the richest Graces. Such *nice Proportions*, as afford the most correct Model for Statuary and Architecture: such *rich Graces*, as the Canvass never bore, as Painting imitates in vain.

Asp. How just in itself, and how pertinent to our Purpose, is that well-known Acknowledgment of the sacred and royal Anatomist; “ *I am curiously wrought †!* There is a Variety, a Regularity, “ and an Elegance, in the Texture of my Body; “ in

* *Thy Lips are like a Thread of Scarlet*, Cant. iv. 3. Like a *Thread*, for their delicate Shape; like a *Thread of Scarlet*, for their glowing Colour.

† *Solomon* has compared the Eyes to *The Fish-pools in Heshbon*. A Comparison, as just, as it is noble.—Observe the Eye in the human Structure, and a fine Piece of Water in the rural Prospect. Each is a very small Part, yet eminently ornamental to the Whole.—Each enlivens the Scene. Without Water, the Landscapè is dull and dreary; without an Eye, the Countenance would be blank and haggard.—A shining Kind of Lustre, sparkles in one; trembles in the other; radiants from both. Both are a Source of innumerable Advantages, to their respective Subjects.—’Tis probable, those Fish-pools in *Heshbon*, being artificially made, were exactly correspondent in Size, in Form, and Situation. If so, the Parallel is remarkably perfect, and the Simile receives the highest Finishing. See *Cant.* vii. 4.

‡ The Original רָקְמָתִי signifies *finely wrought*, or *elegantly flourished with a Needle*.—The Translation adopted by our Liturgy is, in this Place, flat and inexpressive. The *English* Word *fashioned*, has just the same Inferiority to the beautiful *Hebrew* Phrase; as the *Badge*, tacked upon some poor Pensioner’s Coat, has to the Star embroidered on a Nobleman’s Breast. *Psal.* cxxxix. 14.

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“ in the Formation and Arrangement of these
 “ Bones and Muscles, these Veins and Arteries ;
 “ —resembling, shall I say ?—rather, infinitely
 “ surpassing, the most costly and admired Pieces of
 “ Embroidery.” Even those, which were wrought
 under the Direction of inspired Wisdom ; and com-
 pose the rich sacerdotal Vestments *, or the grand
 and sacred Ornaments of the Tabernacle †.

It is one of the finest Similitudes, which the whole
 Circle of polite Arts could afford. And, as used
 by the *Hebrew* Poet as referring to the venerable
 Embellishments of the Sanctuary, receives a pe-
 culiar Dignity. Yet every Comparison, fetched
 from the Performances of Mankind, must neces-
 sarily debase the matchless Subject.—All the En-
 richments, which the Needle can give, or the most
splendid Silks receive, are rude, are coarse, are mere
 Sack-cloth, when set in Opposition to the consum-
 mate Perfection of the fleshy Web. As indeed all
 the celebrated *Palaces, Amphitheatres, Temples*, which
 ever adorned the most magnificent Cities in the
 World, are but a Heap of Confusion, if compared
 with the Symmetry and Beauty of the bodily Fabric.
 —And, what is beyond measure marvelous, all these
 Wonders of Mechanism and Decoration arose—not
 from the purer Elements—not from the more refined
 Parts of the Creation—but from Dust, *Dust of the*
Ground †. How easily, *Theron*, can that stupendous
 ARTI-

* Exod. xxviii. 39.

† Exod. xxvi. 36.

† *The LORD GOD formed Man of the Dust of the*
Ground, Gen. ii. 7. Upon this Circumstance, *St. Chry-*
ostom very justly remarks ; Το εὐτελές της υφιας τέλο δεικνύσι
 μαλιστα της τεχνης το ευπορον και ευμηχανον, οτι εν πηλω και τεφρα
 τωσαυτην ανεθηκεν αρμονικην, και τοιαυτα αισθησεις, εἰω ποιικιλας και
 παιοδοξας. *Ανθρ. ια.*

188 DIALOGUE XII.

ARTIFICER *renew* our Hearts, and transform our Souls into his own Image! Who could raise such delicate and majestic Edifices; the blooming Countenance, and the graceful Mien; the fine Turn of Shape, and the enchanting Harmony of Features; could raise them all from Particles—despicable Particles of the trodden Soil!

I could not forbear interposing this Remark. Because, it tends to manifest our CREATOR's Glory, to encourage our Hopes, and strengthen our Faith. Otherwise, I should be angry with myself, for interrupting your Discourse.—Pray, go on with your Description of the animal Oeconomy. Only let me observe, That such a Course of incessant Action, must *exhaust* the Fluids; must *waste* the Solids; and, unless both are supplied with proper Recruits, must gradually weaken, and at length totally destroy, the Machine.

Ther. For this Reason, it is furnished with the Organs, and endued with the Powers of *Nutrition*.—*Teeth*; the foremost, thin and sharp; fitted to bite asunder the Food, or cut * off such a Portion, as the Mouth can conveniently manage. The hindermost, broad and strong; indented, like the Surface of a Mill-stone †, with small Cavities, and jagged with little Asperities. Which qualify them to

* Called therefore, *Incisivi*.

† Styled accordingly, *Molares*.—We find neither of these Kinds in the new-born Babe. As Milk is, for a considerable Time, its apparent Food, Teeth would be of no Service to the Infant itself. As it is to press the tender Nipple for this milky Sustenance, Teeth would be painful and prejudicial to the Nurse. Therefore Nature has *postponed* the Formation of these fine Implements, till they become both necessary and beneficial.

to grind in Pieces, whatever is transmitted to their Operation.—Were the Teeth, like our other Bones, covered with the usual Membrane, the Act of *Chewing* would always occasion great Uneasiness; and, when any hard Substance is eaten, might even lacerate the tender Tegument. Were they left without any Sort of Covering; they would suffer from the Inclemencies of the Air, and be liable to the Penetration of Liquors. In which Case, they must soon become soft and unfit for Service, or be corrupted, and entirely perish. To guard against these Disadvantages, they are curiously *glazed*, or overlaid with a neat *Enamel*; as white as Ivory, and harder than the Bone itself. Which renders them an Ornament to the Mouth *; secures them from various Injuries; and exempts them from Pain in the Office of Mastication.

As the Rims and Cushions of a Billiard-table, keep the Ball from flying off; and send it back into the green Area, for repeated Essays of Skill; so the *Lips* prevent the Food from slipping out of the Mouth; and, assisted by the Tongue, return it to the renewed Attrition of the Grinders.—While the
Lips,

* This ornamental Furniture of the Mouth, is, in the grand *oriental* Manner, described by Solomon. *Thy Teeth are like a Flock of Sheep, that are even shorn, which come up from the Washing*, Cant. iv. 2. Growing, not single, like the Nose; not in Pairs, like the Eyes; but in Rows considerably numerous, *like a Flock*.—None rising higher than the other; none standing unduly prominent beyond another; but all set as true, as if they were ranged by the Compass; and making as regular an Appearance, as the Flocks *that are even shorn*.—They are clean also as the Fleeces which have no Spot, and white as the Colour of the purest Wool; like the Flocks *just come up from washing* in the crystal Stream.

Lips, in Concert with the Cheeks, are employed in this Work, their Motion compresses the circumjacent Glands; and, from innumerable little Orifices, a thin *pellucid Liquor* * exsudes. Which moistens the attenuated Food, and prepares it for more easy Digestion.—When the Mouth remains inactive, these Fountains are closed. But, when it is exercised, either in speaking or eating, their Moisture then being peculiarly necessary, they never fail to give out a sufficient Quantity.

When the Soldier charges his Carbine, the Cartridge could not make its way to the Bottom, without the Protrusion of the Rammer †. Neither could

* The *Saliva* or Spittle.

† This, and the other Similitudes, it must be confessed, are *too mean* for the noble Occasion. Neither do they, in *every* Circumstance, quadrate with the Functions described. There is very little Affinity, between the Motion of the Muscles, which minister to the Act of Swallowing, and the perpendicular Protrusion of the Rammer. The Comparison is introduced, only to demonstrate the Necessity of *some* propelling Force, in order to convey the Aliment into the proper Receptacle.

When We descant upon a Subject, of such extensive Contrivance, and of such finished Perfection, as the human Structure; it is scarce possible to find Similitudes, that will correspond in *all* Particulars, or that can rise to the *Dignity* of the Original. Yet if they tend, in any tolerable Degree, to explain its Formation, to display its Uses, and render its wonderful Oeconomy somewhat more intelligible, perhaps they may be allowed to take place.

I hope, it will be remembered, that *Theron* speaks, not as an Adept in the Science, but as one whose highest Pretensions are, to admire the Work, and adore the ARTIFICER. Which Acknowledgment may entitle Him to some candid Indulgence, in case He should offend against the *precise anatomical Exactness*, either of Sentiment, or Expression.

could the Food, which We receive at the Mouth, descend, by the Force of its own Weight, through a narrow and clammy Channel, into the Stomach. To effectuate therefore, and expedite its Passage, Muscles, both *strait* and *circular*, are provided. The former, enlarge the Cavity of the Throat, and afford a more easy Admittance; the latter, closing behind the descending Aliment, press it downwards, and finish the Deglutition.—Before the Food enters the Gullet, it must of necessity pass over the Orifice of the *Wind-pipe*; consequently, must be in no small Danger of falling upon the Lungs. Which would, if not entirely obstruct the Breath, yet occasion violent Coughing *, and great Inconveniencies. To obviate this Evil, the all-foreseeing CONTRIVER has placed a *moveable Lid*, or hung a *cartilaginous Draw-bridge* †. When any the smallest Particle of Food advances to the Stomach, this Lid is pulled down and shut close; but, the very Moment the Morsel is swallowed, the Cover, instinctive as it were, springs up and leaves the Passage open. By this two-fold Artifice, the important Passage is always barred and made sure, against any noxious Approaches; yet, is always left free for the necessary Accession of Air, and commodious for the Purposes of Respiration.

When the Maltster prepares his Grain for the Transmutations of the Brewhouse; He suffers it to lie, several Hours, steeping in the Cistern; before it is fit, to be spread upon the Floor, or dried on the Kiln.

* This is what We experience, when, in eating or drinking, any Thing goes (as is commonly, and not improperly said) *the wrong Way*.

† Called the *Epiglottis*.

Kiln. The Meat and Drink likewise must remain, a considerable Time, in the *Stomach*; before they are of a proper Consistence and Temperature, either for the tender Coats, or the delicate Operation of the Bowels. For which Purpose, that great Receiver is made—strong to bear—capacious to hold—and so curiously contrived, as to lay a *temporary Embargo* * upon its Contents. Here, they are lodged in the very Center of Warmth, and concocted by the most kindly Combination of Heat and Humidity. Here, they are saturated with other fermenting or diluting Juices; and are kneaded, as it were, by the Motion of the Stomach, and Compression of the neighbouring Parts. So that every the minutest Fragment is separated; the Whole is reduced to a *Tenuity*, abundantly finer than the exactest Grinding could effect; and all is worked up into the smoothest, most *nitely mixed* Pulp imaginable.—From hence it is dislodged, by a gently acting Force; and passes, by a gradual Transition, into the Cavity of the Intestines.

Near the Entrance, punctual as a Porter in his Lodge, waits the *Gall-bladder* †; ready to transfuse its acrimonious, but salutary Juices, on the advancing Aliment. Which *dissolve* its remaining Viscidities; *scour* the Passage of the Intestines; and keep all its fine Apertures clear.—This Bag, as the Stomach fills, is elevated by the Distention; as the Stomach empties, is proportionably depressed. The former Posture brings on a Discharge, the latter occa-

* Which is quite contrary to the Oeconomy of the Gullet; though they are not only contiguous to each other, but a Continuation of the same Tube.

† The *Gall-bladder* is situate upon the lower Margin of the Liver; and to secrete the *bilious* Juice, is supposed to be the principal Use of that largest of Glands.

sions a Suppression, of the *Bile*. It is furnished also with a Valve, of a very peculiar, but most convenient Form *; through which the deterfive Liquid, cannot hastily pour, but must gently ooze.—Admirable Construction! Which, without any Care or Consciousness of ours, prohibits an *immoderate* Effusion, yet ascertains the *needful* Supply.

Sufficiently charged with this adventitious Fluid, the nutritive Mass pursues its Way through the *Intestines*. Whose Meanders, are incomparably more curious and wonderful, than the Mazes of the *Dædalean* Labyrinth. They are actuated with a worm-like or undulatory Motion †: which protrudes the received Aliment, and forces its fine milky Particles into the *Lacteal Vessels*. These are a Series of the most delicate *Strainers*; ranged, in countless Multitudes, all along the Sides of the winding Passage. Each so nicely framed, as to admit the nutrimental balmy Juices, and reject the gross excrementitious Dregs.—Had the Intestines been *strait*, they must have been *short*. Then the Food might have gone through and escaped, without resigning a sufficient Quantity of its nourishing Particles. Therefore, this grandest of all the vital Ducts, is artfully convolved, that it may be greatly extended: that it may afford Nature an Opportunity, of *sifting* more thoroughly whatever passes, and of detaining whatever may serve her Purposes.—Lest such Lengths of Entrails, should be entangled among themselves, or be cumbrous to the Wearer, they are packed into the neatest Folds, and lie within a narrow Compass. They are at least six Times longer,

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longer,

* A *spiral* Form.

† Styled *vermicular* or *peristaltic*.

longer *, than the Body which contains them. Yet are they lodged, not crowded; in a Part, not in the whole Region, of the lower Belly. And amidst this small Space, have sufficient Room to execute the nicest and most important Functions.—Though the alimentary Substance can never mistake its Way; yet it may, through some accidental Impediment, attempt to return backward. In this Case, a Valve intervenes; and renders, what would be extremely pernicious, almost always impracticable.—As the Whole proceeds in this serpentine Course, it is perpetually sending off Detachments of nutritious Juices. In Consequence of which, it would lose its soft Temperature; might become rugged, and pain the tender Parts; perhaps, be hindered from sliding on to its final Exit. To prevent such an Obstruction, Glands are posted in proper Places †, and discharge a lubricating Fluid; which aids the Progress of the Mass, and renews the Secretion of the Chyle. Till all that remains of the One, is clean drawn off; and the Other—But here You must excuse me; and for my Neglect of farther

Par-
 * According to this Calculation, they must measure, in a pretty tall Man, more than thirty-six Feet.—The Substance of the Bowels, though thin to a Delicacy, is strong to a Wonder. The Skin of an Ox-gut, I am told, will endure the Blows of the Gold-beater's Hammer, for many Months, nay for several Years.

† In the Bowels, which lie nearest the Stomach, these Glands are smaller or fewer: because, in those Parts, the Aliment is copiously furnished with Moisture. Whereas, in the Bowels, which are more remote from the Stomach, and receive the Food drained of a considerable Quantity of its Chyle, the lubricating Glands are either multiplied or enlarged. A most admirable Provision! Apparently diversified, according to the several Changes of the Aliment; yet exactly adapted to the Exigencies of the Animal.

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Particularity, your Author shall make an Apology ;
*Quemadmodum autem Reliquiæ Cibi depellantur, tum
 astringentibus se Intestinis, tum relaxantibus, haud sane
 difficile dictu est : sed tamen prætereundum est, ne quid
 habeat Injucunditatis Oratio **.

The Chyle, drawn off by all the secretory Orifices,
 is carried along Millions of the finest Ducts †, and
 lodged in several commodious Cells ‡. As a Traveler,
 by baiting upon the Road, and taking proper Re-
 freshment, is better qualified to pursue his Journey :
 so the Chyle, diverting to those little Inns, is mixed
 with a thin, diluting, watery Substance ; which ren-
 ders it more apt to flow, and more fit for Use.—
 From hence it is conveyed to one common Recep-
 tacle §, and mounts through a perpendicular Tube.
 When Provision or Ammunition is transmitted to
 an Army, it generally passes under an Escort of
 able Troops. As this milky Fluid is the immediate

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Support,

* CICERO *De Nat. Deor.*—As *Theron* avoids meddling
 with a Subject, which is become useless and putrescent,
 I think myself obliged to imitate his *Delicacy*. Only I
 would add one Remark in the Notes, and shall beg leave
 to express it in *Greek*. That if it should prove, in any
 Degree, disgustful ; it may have, at least, the negative
 Merit, not to offend many Readers. *Ενν δὲ τὰ ἀποχωρεῖν
 δύσχημα, ἀντιπερὶ τὰς τῶν οὐλῶν ἢ φούρας, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς
 ἀποβολῆς ἀπὸ τῶν αἰσθητῶν.* SOCRAT. Memorab.

† Fine indeed ! Since their Orifices, through which
 they admit the Chyle, are not discoverable even by the
 very best Microscopes. To this prodigiously nice Construc-
 tion it is owing, that nothing enters the Substance of the
 Blood, but what is smaller than the smallest Arteries in
 the System, and thereby fitted to pass through the finest
 capillary Vessels, without causing any Obstruction.

‡ The Glands of the Mesentery.

§ The *Receptaculum Chyli* ; a Reservatory, placed near
 the left Kidney.

Support, and principal Nourishment of the whole System, its Conveyance is guarded with singular Caution. The *perpendicular Tube*, not having sufficient Force of its own, is laid contiguous to the great Artery; whose strong Pulsation drives on the creeping Fluid; enables it to overcome the steep Ascent, and unload its precious Treasure at the very Door of the Heart.—Here, it enters the Trunk of a large Vein, most conveniently opened for its Reception. It enters in a *slanting* or *oblique* Direction. By this Method of Approach, it avoids thwarting, and coincides with the purple Stream; which, instead of obstructing its Admission, expedites its Passage; and, instead of being a Bar to exclude it, becomes a Vehicle to waft it.—Its Entrance is farther secured by a Valve, whose Ministration is doubly serviceable: *shutting* the Aperture against the reflux Blood, in case it should offer to obtrude itself; but *opening* a free, safe, and easy Avenue, to introduce this Manna of Nature.

The *Blood*, through every Stage of its ample Circuit, having sustained great Expences; being laid under Contribution, by every Gland in the whole System; and having supplied Myriads of the capillary Vessels, with Matter for insensible Perspiration; must be very much impoverished. But is most opportunely recruited, by this Accession of Chyle. Yet though *recruited*, it is not *refined*. In its present crude State, it is absolutely unqualified to perform the vital Tour, or carry on the animal Functions. Therefore, by a grand Apparatus of muscular Fibres, it is wafted into the *Lungs*; and pours a thousand, thousand Rills into either Lobe.—In the Cells, the spongy Cells of this amazing *Labyrinth*,

Sense to every Nerve, and communicate Motion to every Limb. Part flows downward; rolls the reeking Current through all the lower Quarters; and dispenses the nutrimental Stores, even to the meanest Member, and the minutest Vessel.

Observe, how the stately *Thames*, and the rapid *Rhine*, refresh the Forests and the Groves; water the Towns, which crowd their Banks; and make the Meadows they intersect, laugh and sing. So, only with an incomparably richer Fluid, and with infinitely more numerous Streams, this human River laves the several Regions of the Body. Transfusing Vigour, and propagating Health, through the Whole.

But, how shall a Stream, divided into Myriads of Channels, and pervading innumerable Tracts, how shall this be brought back again to its Source? Should any Portion, like your *Lake-waters* after a Land-flood, deviate from their Course, or be unable to return—Putrefaction would take place—A Nuisance would arise—Death might ensue. Therefore, the All-wise CREATOR has connected the Extremity of the Arteries, with the Beginning of the Veins. So that the same Force, which darts the crimson Wave through the former, drives it through the latter. Thus it is reconducted, without the least Extravasation, to the great salient Cistern*.

There

* *Solomon* makes use of this Similitude—Or ever the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain; or the Wheel broken at the Cistern. The two Ventricles of the Heart, replenished with Blood, are fitly represented by a Cistern; and the contractile Force of their Fibres, acts like the Water-wheel in Hydraulics.—The *Pituber*, which receives the Water at the Spring-head, and conveys it away for the Owner's

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There played off afresh, it renews and perpetuates the vital Functions.

Where two *opposite* Currents would be in Danger of clashing, a fibrous Excrescence interposes *; which, like a projecting Pier, breaks the Stroke of each, and throws both into their proper Receptacle. —When the Wasture is to be *speedy*, the Channels either forbear to wind in their Course †, or to lessen in their Dimensions ‡. When the Progress is to be *retarded*, the Tubes are twined into various Convolutions ||, or their Diameter is contracted into a narrower Size.—Modeled by these judicious Rules; guarded by these wise Precautions; the living Flood never discontinues its interchangeable Tide: but, Night and Day, whether We sleep or wake, still perseveres to fall *briskly* through the Arteries, and return *safely* through the Veins.

Such astonishing Expedients are used, to concoct, digest, assimilate the Food! To convert it into Chyle—to blend it with the Blood—and to distribute both through the Body! By means of which, the animal Constitution is nourished and maintained. In Youth, its Bulk is increased; in Age, its Decays are repaired; and it is kept in tenantable Condition for the Soul, during the Space of seventy or eighty Years.

N 4

These

Service, may probably signify the *Aorta*, and the *pulmonary* Artery; whose Functions correspond with the Uses of such a Vessel. *Eccles. xii. 6.*

* In the Point, where the Streams, from the *Vena cava* and *Vena ascendens*, meet.

† In the great Artery, which descends to the Feet.

‡ In every Interval, between all the Ramifications.

|| In the Vessels, which carry the Blood to the Brain, which form the viscous Secretions; and indeed which constitute all the Glands.

These are a few, and but a *very few* Instances of that Contrivance, Regularity, and Beauty, which are observable in the human Frame. Attentive Enquirers discover *deeper* Footsteps of Design, and *more refined* Strokes of Skill. Discover them, not only in the grand and most distinguished Parts, but in every Limb, and in every Organ: I may venture to add, in every Fibre that is extended, and in every Globule * that flows.

Asp. How *various* is the System of the Body! Various, in the Substance, as well as in the Shape, of the several Parts! Yet all wrought of one and the *same* original Mass!—Is it not strange, that the very same Speck of Matter, should spread itself into a Lining of Skin, and swell into Beds of Flesh; should be extended into tough Sinews, and hardened into strong Bones; should here be impenetrable as the solid Rock, there be transparent as the finest Gause †?—Is it not exceedingly strange, that one and the same Scrap of simple uncompound Materials, should form the Columns and the Rafter; should compose the Aqueducts and Reservoirs; should be sufficient to execute both the Masonry and the Joinery: in short, to constitute the Shell, the Furniture, and all the Ornaments, of the completest Edifice in the World!

* The extreme *Minuteness* of the Globules, which form the *red* Part of our Blood, is one Exemplification of this Remark. If, as Mr. *Devinboeck* computes, every Globule be 25,000 times smaller, than the smallest Grain of Sand.

† *Rock, Gause*—This is particularly observable, in the Construction of the *Teeth*, and the Composition of the *Gums*.

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The System, I observe, though various, is *uniform*. Amidst the greatest Multiplicity of Parts, the most perfect Harmony subsists. No one hinders, but each assists, the Operation of another; and all conspire to the Benefit and Preservation of the Whole.—Most judiciously has the great Apostle touched this Subject! Most happily has He applied it, to illustrate the Reasonableness, and enforce the Practice, both of *personal* and *social* Duties, of private Content and public Concord.

The Body, He observes, *is not one Member, but many*. To each of which some peculiar and needful Office is assigned. So that the *Foot*, though placed in the lowest Order, and destined to serve on the very Ground, has no Reason to reckon itself a worthless Outcast; or to say, *Because I am not the Head, I am not of the Body* *. Neither has the *Head*, in its exalted Station, and amidst its honourable Functions, any Cause to despise the inferior Limbs; or to say, with Contempt and Self-sufficiency, *I have no Need* of

* 1 Cor. xii. 12, &c. There seems to be a *curious Exaltation* in this *Protopopæia*, not observed by *Aspasio*, but very justly remarked by *St. Chrysostom*. Οὐ ποιεῖ τὸν ποδὶ τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ διαλεγεμένον, ἀλλὰ τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἀναβέβηκα χεῖρ, τῇ δὲ ἀκροῇ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς· ἐπειδὴ γὰρ οὐ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ὑπέρχουσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς οὐσίᾳ ἀναβέβηκοσι φθονεῖν ἐπιθαμεν, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτοὺς εἰς ποικίλῃς τῇ ἐνδοξίᾳ. The Apostle does not suppose the Foot remonstrating against the Head. But the Foot is introduced, as lodging the Complaint against the Hand. While the Ear, a more noble Organ, exercises Emulation against the Eye. Each respecting a Part, which bears some Affinity or Resemblance to itself. For We are not accustomed to envy Those, who move in the most exalted Spheres, and far surpass Us; but Those only, who are on a Level with Ourselves, or but a small Remove above Us. Therefore the sacred Writer makes this judicious Association.

of You.—If there were no Feet, what would become of the locomotive Faculty? Or how could the Body convey itself from one Place to another? If there were no Hands, what should we do for the Instruments of Action? Or how could the animal Frame be defended and accommodated?—Nay, the Parts, *which seem to be less honourable*, are necessary. Even those, which form the Sediments, or throw off the Dregs, are of the last Importance to Life and its Comforts. Should those be obstructed in their Action, the most raging Torment ensues; should the Obstruction continue, Death is the inevitable Consequence. By this wise Adjustment, *there is no Schism in the Body*; no separate or interfering Ends are pursued by the Members; but the Safety and Support of each are the one undivided Care of all.

Thus should it be among Men, and among Christians, in the Civil Community, and in the Catholic Church. There is in both a *Subordination* of Persons, but a *Concatenation* of Interests. For which Reason, a general Agreement should take place, and a mutual Subserviency to each other's Welfare.—The *Meaneſt* have no Cause to be dissatisfied with their Condition; but to acquiesce in the unerring Disposal of Providence, and cheerfully contribute their Share to the common Good.—The *Higheſt* should condescend to Men of low Estate; and maintain a Regard for the Well-being of the Poorest, as that which is intimately connected with their own.—In a Word; *each* should feel a tender Concern for all; rejoicing in their Happiness, and studying to establish it; sympathizing with their Miseries, and endeavouring to relieve them.

I am sure, my *Theron* will be pleased with this fine Comparison, used by the Apostle; and adapted to Purposes, at once so noble and so benevolent. Especially, as it receives additional Propriety and Force from his own Observations.—But I have one more Enquiry to make.

Your System, though *organized*, though endued with a Principle of *Motion*, and furnished with the Powers of *Nutrition*, is still destitute of *Sense*.—The Creation abounds with Objects, fitted to yield the most refined Entertainment. The Sun impurples the Robe of Morning, and Stars bespangle the Curtains of Night. Flowers of silver Whiteness, and of golden Lustre, enamel the Ground. Fruits of all radiant Hues, and of every delicious Taste, hang amiably dangling on the Boughs.

————— *Airs also, vernal Airs,
Breathing the Smell of Field and Grove, attune
The trembling Leaves.*

But We hear of no Capacities, formed for the *Enjoyment* of these various Delights. Without which, the Breath of Fields must lose its reviving Fragrance; the whispering Grove must degenerate into sullen Silence; and Nature's Book of Knowledge, all fair and instructive, be no better than a vast unmeaning Blank.

Ther. Therefore, the great CREATOR, profusely gracious to Mankind, has made Us a Present, an inestimable Present, of the *Senses*. To be the Inlets of innumerable Pleasures, and the Means of administering innumerable Advantages.

High

High in the Head, bright and conspicuous as a Star in the Brow of Evening, is placed the Eye. In this elevated Situation, like a Centinel posted in his Watch-tower, it commands the most enlarged Prospect.—Consisting only of simple Fluids, inclosed in thin Tunicks, it conveys to our Apprehension all the Graces of blooming Nature; and all the Glories of the visible Heavens.—How prodigiously wonderful! That an Image of the *hugest* Mountains, and a Transcript of the most *diversified* Landscapes, shall enter the small Circle of the Pupil!—How surprisingly artful! That the Rays of Light, like an inimitable Pencil, should paint on the optic Nerves; paint in an Instant of Time; paint in their *truest* Colours, and *exactest* Lineaments, every Species of external Objects!

The Eye is so tender, that a slight Accident, scarce perceivable by some other Parts of the Body, would be very injurious to its delicate Frame. It is guarded therefore with remarkable Circumspection, and the most solicitous Care: with a Care, evidently proportioned to its nice Texture, and extensive Usefulness. It is *intrenched* deep in the Head; and *barri- caded*, on every Side, with a strong Fortification of Bones.—As the Incurſion of the smallest Fly would incommode the polished Surface, it is farther defended by two substantial *Curtains*, hung on a most slender cartilaginous Rod. Which secure it, not barely from Blows, and from any hurtful Attrition; but also from every troublesome Annoyance. In Sleep, when there is no Occasion to exercise the Sense, but an absolute Necessity to protect the Organ, these *Curtains* *spontaneously* close. At any Time, they will *fly* together with a Motion, quick

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as the Alarm of Fear, I had almost said, quicker than Thought itself. At all Times, they are lined with an extremely fine Sponge *, wet with its own native Dew: Which lubricate the Eye-ball; oil, as it were, its Wheels; and fit it for a Course of unwearied Activity.—At the End of this skinny Mantelet (if I may use the military Style) is planted a Range of bristly *Pallisadoes* †. Which keep out the least Mote; ward off even the straggling Atom; and moderate the otherwise too potent Impressions of the Sun-beams ‡.

The
10* The *Glandula Lacrymalis* and its Ducts; opening on the inner Part of the Eye-lid, and secreting the Fluid, which *Theron* calls his Oil; because, it irrigates the Eye-ball, and facilitates its Motion.

† The Hairs, which arise upon the Extremities of the Eye-lash, grow only to a certain convenient Length, and never stand in need of cutting.—They are not flaccid and pendulous, like those of the Head; but *stiff* and *prominent* like Bristles. The first Sort would be troublesome, the last is beneficial.—Add to this, that their Points stand out of the Way; that those of the upper Eye-lid being bent upwards, and those of the lower downwards.—So nicely attentive is PROVIDENCE, even to such very small Matters! Or rather, so gracious is our Almighty CREATOR, that He counts nothing small, which stands connected with our Comfort and Advantage.

‡ The incessant, the more than fatherly Care, which the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY takes of his People, is represented in Scripture by this extraordinary Provision, made for the Security of the Eye. Which is one of the *finest* Images, that Fancy can form; and one of the most *consolatory* Truths, that Faith can believe. *He kept Him as the Apple of his Eye*, Deut. xxxii. 10.—*He that toucheth You, toucheth the Apple of his Eye*, Zech. ii. 8.—The Reader will easily see, that the Comparison, every Way beautiful, is carried to the *highest* Pitch of Energy and Beauty, by the sacred Writers. Not barely the Eye, but the *Apple* or *Pupil* of the Eye; the tenderest Part even of the most tender Member.

The *Brows* are a kind of natural *Pent-house*, thatched and arched with curious Wreaths of Hair. The Thatch lies as smooth, as the Linen that is neatly plaited, and newly ironed. It serves to divert the Sweat, from trickling into the Eyes, and offending them with its Brine. The *Arches* are so finely coloured, and so elegantly turned, that they set off the Whiteness of the Forehead, and bestow additional Grace on the whole Countenance.—Because, in our waking Hours, there is almost an incessant Call for those little Orbs, they run upon the finest *Castors*; rolling upwards or downwards, to the Right-hand or to the Left; with the utmost Speed, and with equal Ease. Which Circumstance, added to the Flexibility of the Neck, renders our *two* Eyes as useful, as if the whole Body, like the living Creature in St. *John's* Vision, was full of Eyes before and behind *.

The *Ear* consists of an outward Porch and inner Rooms, with Tools of the most admirable Contrivance and finished Workmanship. The Contrivance and the Workmanship incomparably nicer, than the Designs of *Palladio*, or the Architecture of *Solomon's* Temple; though the former were drawn from the magnificent Monuments of *Rome*, though the latter was built in the Taste of *Heaven*. Yea; so consummately nice is the Structure of this Organ, that GOD, the only wise GOD, is not ashamed to be called its Artificer. He that planted the Ear †,

Rev. iv. 6.

† The Psalmist uses the Word *planted*, to describe the Situation of the Ear; and the Word *formed*, to denote the Structure of the Eye. In both which Expressions, there seems to be the utmost Propriety and the greatest

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is to be found among the Titles of the exalted JEHOVAH.—In one very remarkable Peculiarity, this minute Fabric resembles that sacred Edifice, the Porch being loftier * than any other Part of the Building.

The *Porch*, I call that semicircular Lodge, which stands somewhat prominent from the Head; and is—not *soft* and *sinking* as Flesh, lest it should absorb the Sound, rather than promote the Repercussion; not *hard* and *stubborn* as Bone, lest it should occasion painful Inconveniencies, when We repose Ourselves on either Side—but of a *cartilaginous* Substance, covered with a tight Expansion of Skin, and wrought into irregular Bends and Hollows. Which, like circling Hills, or surrounding rocky Shores †, collect the wandering Undulations of the Air; and transmit them, with a vigorous Impulse, to the finely stretched Membrane of the Tympanum ‡.—

The

Delicacy.—The Mechanism of the Ear, like a Root planted (צמח) in the Earth, is sunk deep into the Head, and concealed from public View. Whereas, the Ball of the Eye, like some *finely-wrought* (צור) Pilaster on a Building, is prominent on the Face, and presented to general Observation. *Psal.* xciv. 9.

* Compare 1 *Kings* vi. 2. with 2 *Chron.* iii. 4.

† Alluding to those expressive Lines, where *Echo* seems to live in the Sound, as well as in the Sense:

———— *Vocemque inclusa volutant*

Littora, pulsati Colles Clamore resultant.

VIRG.

‡ So called, because it resembles a *Drum*, both in Figure and Use. Being a fine Skin, expanded upon a Circle of Bones, and over a polished reverberating Cavity.—It is affected by the Vibrations of the external Air, as the Covering of the War-drum is by the Impressions of the Stick.—It is also furnished with *Braces*, which strain or relax it at pleasure; and accommodate its Tension either to loud or languid Sounds.

The *Avenue*, or narrow Entry, is secured from the insinuating Attempts of Insects, by a *Morass* (shall I say?) of bitter and viscous Matter: disgusting to their Taste, and embarrassing to their Feet.—The *Hammer* and the *Anvil*; the *Stirrup* and the *Drum*; the winding *Labyrinths* *, and the sounding *Galleries*; these, and other Pieces of Mechanism, all instrumental to the Power of Hearing, are beyond Description curious.

Amazingly nice must be the Formation, and inconceivably exact the Tension of the auditory Nerves! Since they correspond with the smallest Tremors of the Atmosphere, and easily distinguish their most subtle Variations. With the gentle Gales that fan Us, or even with the ruder Blasts that assault Us, these delicate Strings are but little affected. Whereas, they are perfect *Unisons* with those fine, those *significant* Agitations of the Air, which the acutest Touch is unable to discern. These living Chords, tuned by an Almighty Hand, and diffused through the echoing Isles, and sonorous Cells—these receive the Impressions of Sound, and propagate them to the Brain. These † give Existence

* Of this Kind is the auditory Tube; intended to *soften* and *qualify* the rushing Sound. Lest, if the Incur-sion were direct, it might be too impetuous, and injure the delicate Expanse of the Tympanum.—While this is designed to moderate, the Concavities of the inner Structure are prepared to *heighten* and *invigorate* the Sound, by calling in the auxiliary Force of an Echo.—Such Intentions, so *varying*, nay so *opposite*, concur to form this admirable Organ!

† Elegantly styled, *The Daughters of Music*. For this Phrase may refer, as well to the Organs which *distinguish*, as to those which *form*, the harmonious Accents. *Ecclesi.*

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Existence to the Charms of Music, and reciprocate the rational Entertainments of Discourse. These treat my *Assasio* with the Melody of the Woodland Choirs, and afford *me* the superior Pleasure of my Friend's Conversation.

The Eye perceives only the Objects that are *before* it; whereas, the Ear warns Us of Transactions, that pass above Us, behind Us, all around Us.—The Eye is useless, amidst the Gloom of Night; and cannot carry its Observation, through the bolted Door, or the closed Window-shutter. But the Ear admits her Intelligence, through the *darkest* Medium, and the *minute* Cranny.—The Eye is upon Duty, only in our waking Hours; but the Ear is always expanded, and always accessible *: a Courier, which never tires: a Centry, ever in his Box.—To secure a Resource, in case any Misfortune should disable one of the hearing or seeing Organs, our all-gracious MAKER has given Us *Duplicates* of each.

As there are tremulous Concussions impressed upon the Air, discernable only by the Instruments of Hearing; there are also *odoriferous* Particles, wafted by the same aerial Vehicle, which are perceivable only by the *Smell*.—The Nostrils are wide at the Bottom,

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xii. 4.—Methinks, I am always desirous to add any apposite Expression, or parallel Passage from the BIBLE. As I find, Writers of Taste and Politeness are studious to embellish their Works, with Quotations from the *Classics*. And I persuade myself, the Reader will allow me to gratify this favourite Inclination. Because, every Portion of that ineffimable Book, however minute, is like the Filings of Gold; or the Sparks of a Diamond. Is sure, when properly applied, to add *Worth*, and impart *Beauty*.

Auditus autem semper patet. Ejus enim Sensus etiam dormientes egemus. A quo, cum Sonus est acceptus, etiam e Somno excitimur. De Nat. Deor.

that a large Quantity of Effluvia may enter; narrow at the Top; that, when entered, they may close their Ranks, and act with greater Vigour.—Fine, beyond all Imagination, are the Steams which exhale from fetid or fragrant Bodies. The very best Microscopes, which discover *Thousands* and *Thousands* of Animalcules in a Drop of putrified Water, cannot bring *one* Individual, among all these evanescent Legions, to our Sight. They sail, in numberless Squadrons, close to our Eyes, close by our Ears; yet are so amazingly attenuated, that they elude the Search of both. Nevertheless, so judiciously * are the *olfactory* Nets laid, and so artfully

* The *Keeness* and *Sagacity* of this Sense, furnished the evangelical Prophet with a beautiful Metaphor, to display the *Accuracy* of the MESSIAH's Judgment in spiritual Things. *Isai. xi. 3.*

וְיָדָעוֹ implies his Faculty or Sense of *Smelling*; which Expression is accommodated to our Language, and properly enough translated, *Shall make Him of quick Understanding.* q. d. “He shall judge, not according to external Appearance, but according to the State of the inner Man. Unfeigned Self-abasement, Affiance in a REDEEMER's Righteousness, and Faith purifying the Heart; these Endowments, though not observed, or, if observed, not valued by the World; *these* shall be the Test of his Approbation, and the Objects of his Esteem. These constitute, what is called in the next Words, *The Fear of the LORD.*”

“In determining the Reality of these Qualities, He shall be *unerringly* exact, and *infallibly* true. Let Hypocrisy put on every Mask, and practise all her Wiles; they shall avail nothing before the ROOT and OFF-SPRING of *David* (Ver. 11). As those extremely subtle Effluvia, which escape the Inquisition of every other Sense, are easily and perfectly distinguished by the *Smell*; so, those Recesses of the Breast, and those Secrets of the Heart, which lie too deep for all hu-

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their Meshes sized, that they catch these vanishing Fugitives. They catch the roaming Perfumes, which fly off from the opening Honeyfuckle; and take in the stationed Sweets, which hover round the expanded Rose. They imbibe all the balmy Fragrance of Spring, all the aromatic Exhalations of Autumn, and enable Us to banquet even on the invisible Dainties of Nature.

Furnished as We are with these several Organs,

~~Not a Breeze~~

Flies o'er the Meadow, not a Cloud imbibes

The setting Sun's Effulgence, not a Strain

From all the Tenants of the warbling Shade

Ascends, but whence our Senses can partake

Fresh Pleasure.*

Another Capacity for frequent Pleasure, our bountiful CREATOR has bestowed, in granting Us the Powers of *Taste*. By means of which, the Food that supports our Body, feasts our Palate; first,

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treats

“man Discernment; even they are naked and open,
“are obvious and palpable, to *his* divinely sagacious
“Understanding.”

* See that very elegant Poem, THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION, Book III.—’Tis true, I am no Profelyte to the Author’s Principles, either political or moral; to his *Republican* Administration, or his *Shaftesburian* Ethics. Much less can I admire that pompous and solemn Whim, of making *Ridicule the Test of Truth*. Which seems just as suitable to the Fitness of Things, as to place Harlequin in the Seat of Lord Chief Justice.—But if We look for the Glow of Imagination, and the Harmony of Numbers; Energy and Lustre of Description, with Correctness and Delicacy of Taste; I know not any didactic Poem, which presents Us with all these Graces in such high Perfection.

treats Us with a pleasing Regale ; then, distributes its beneficial Recruits.—The Hone bedewed with Oil, whets the Razor into the utmost Keeness. The *Saliva*, flowing upon the Tongue, and moistening its Nerves, quickens them into the liveliest Acts of Sensation.—This Sense is circumstanced, in a Manner peculiarly benign and wise ; so as to be a standing, though silent Plea for *Temperance*. Without recurring to the Vengeance of GOD, or the Terrors of eternal Judgment, it is a powerful Dissuasive from irregular and excessive Indulgencies. Because, the Exercise of Sobriety, sets the finest Edge on its Faculties ; and adds the most *poignant* Relish to its Enjoyments. Whereas, Riot and Voluptuousness *pall* the Appetite ; blunt its Sensibility ; and render the Gratifications extremely languid, if not perfectly insipid.—The Sight, the Smell, the Taste are, not only so many separate Sources of Delight, but a joint Security to our Health. They are the *vigilant* and *accurate* Inspectors, which examine our Food, and enquire into its Properties ; whether it be pleasant or disagreeable ; wholesome or noxious. For the Discharge of this Office, they are excellently qualified, and most commodiously situate. So that nothing can gain Admission through the Mouth, till it has undergone the Scrutiny, and obtained the Passport of them all.

To all these, as a most necessary and advantageous Supplement, is added the Sense of *Feeling*. Which renders the whole Assemblage complete.—While other Senses have a particular Place of Residence ; this is diffused throughout *the whole* Body. In the Palms of the Hands, on the Tips of the Fingers, and

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and indeed through all the extreme Parts of the Flesh, it is most quick and lively: as the advanced Guards, or Scouts upon the Frontiers, are or ought to be peculiarly attentive and wakeful.—Scouts did I say? The whole Army of *Xerxes*, drawn out in Battle array, with his *Millions* of supernumerary Attendants *, were but like a few *Gleaners* straggling in the Field; if compared, either in Number or Order, with those nervous Detachments, which pervade the Texture of the Skin, and minister to the Act of Feeling.—How happily is this Sense tempered between the two Extremes! Neither so *acute*, as the Membranes of the Eye; nor so *obtuse*, as the Callus of the Heel. The former would expose Us to continual Pain; render our Clothes galling, and the very Down oppressive. The latter would quite benumb the Body, and almost annihilate the Touch.—Nor this alone, but *all* the Senses are most exactly adapted to their respective Offices, and to the several Exigencies of our present State. Were they *strained* to a much higher Tone, they would be Avenues of Anguish. Were they *relaxed* into greater Insensibility, they would be so many useless Incumbrances.

Say, what the Use, were finer Senses given,

I inspect a Mite, not comprehend the Heav'n?

The Touch if tremblingly alive all o'er,

To smart and agonize at every Pore?

O 3

Or

* The Soldiers and Attendants of *Xerxes*, amounted to five Millions two hundred and eighty Thousand. Another Army, so large and numerous, occurs not in all the Records of History.

Vid. HEROD. Lib. VII.

Or quick Effluvia darting through the Brain,

*Die of a Rose in aromatic Pain *?*

Asp. How admirable and gracious is this Provision, which the blessed GOD has made, to accommodate Us with delightful Sensations, and instructive Ideas!—The Taste, the Touch, and the Smell, are somewhat *straitened* in the Extent of their Operations. The Ear carries on a Correspondence with a *larger* Circle of Objects. But the Sight most amply supplies, whatever is wanting in all the other Senses. The Sight spreads itself to an *infinite* Multitude of Bodies; and brings within our Notice some of the *remotest* Parts of the Universe.—The Taste, the Touch, the Smell, perceive nothing but what is brought to their very Doors. Whereas, the Eye extends its Observation, as far as the Orbit of *Saturn*; nay glances, and in an Instant of Time, to the inconceivable Distance of the Stars. The Compass of the Earth, together with the Immensity of the Skies, are its unlimited Range.

From this remarkable Variety, with regard to the *Sphere* and *Activity*, the Acuteness and Vivacity of the Senses, *St. Paul* forms one of the finest, boldest, and most important Comparisons in the World. By this He illustrates the Difference between the Wisdom, which is derived from the Word of divine Revelation; and the Wisdom, which is acquired by Dint of human Application.—In his Oration to the *Athenians*, speaking of their most celebrated Sages, He says; *If so be, they might feel after, and find HIM* †. In his Epistle to the He-

* *Eth. Epist. I.*

† *Acts xvii. 27.* Εἰ ἀρα γὰρ ἠνέλεθον αὐτοὺς.

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brews, speaking of the Man *Moses*, our Author observes; That *He endured as seeing Him who is invisible* *. Writing to his *Corinthian* Converts, He adds, as a farther Heightening of the Contrast; *We all beholding with open Face the Glory of the LORD* †.

—The Knowledge of the *Philosopher*, is like that obscure and scanty Information, which is but difficultly obtained by groping with the Hand, in the Gloom of a dark Night. The Knowledge of the *Christian*, is like that copious Influx of clear and enlarged Ideas, which We receive by the Mediation of the Eye, amidst the Shining of a bright Day.

Tully, We find, has, in the Book before us, hit upon some of the most general and obvious Uses, to which the several Parts of the human Body are adapted. Yet how *superficial* and *deficient* appears his Penetration, when We take in the much deeper Discoveries, and the much higher Improvements of our modern Anatomy! Thus, and abundantly more defective, is his Knowledge of moral Duties and divine Doctrines; when compared with what is taught Us, in the *plain* Sermon on the Mount, and the unstudied Epistles of the *Jewish* Tent-maker.

Therefore, though I would bless the beneficent GOD, for the Ministration of all the Senses, and particularly for the noble Organs of Vision: I would be more especially thankful for that Light of the World, *CHRIST JESUS* and his glorious Gospel; as well as for that *spiritual Eye*, by which the One is understood, and the Other seen — a *lively Faith*. I would also long for that Place of beatific Enjoyment, where our Views of the adorable GOD-

O 4

HEAD,

* Heb. xi. 27.

† 2 Cor. iii. 18.

HEAD, and our Acquaintance with the sublimest Truths, will as much transcend all our present Apprehensions, as the most enlightened *Saint* exceeds the benighted *Gentile*.

Ther. The crowning Gift, that which improves— But why am I so prolix? Why should I resume a Subject, already spun out to a Degree of Tediousness? Why weary my *Aspasio*, and put his Attention to Penance?

Asp. Dear *Theron*, why do You talk in this Manner? How can You admit such a Suspicion? How can You offer to drop your Narrative, just at this interesting Point? Weary! No; I am almost inclined to speak, what perhaps your Modesty will dislike to hear speak—

Ther. Enough. Forbear. I proceed — That which improves the Satisfaction, and augments the beneficial Effects, accruing from all the Senses, is *Speech*.—Speech makes me a Gainer, from the Eyes and Ears of other People; from the Ideas they conceive, and the Observations they make. What an admirable Instrument, for articulating the Voice, and modifying it into Speech, is the *Tongue*!—The Tongue has neither Bone nor Joint; yet fashions itself, with the utmost Volubility, into every Shape and every Posture, which can express Sentiment, or constitute Harmony. This little Collection of muscular Fibres, under the conducting Skill of the CREATOR, is the Artificer of our Words*.

By

* I am sensible, that the *Glottis* has a considerable Share, in modulating the Sound, and forming the Voice. But, as the Nature and Office of this most curious *Aperture*, are very little known by the Generality of People; We

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By this We communicate the *Secrets* of the Breast, and make our very *Thoughts* audible. By this We instruct the Ignorant, and comfort the Distressed; We glorify GOD, and edify each Other *; the Academic explains the abstrusest Sciences, and the Ecclesiastic preaches the everlasting Gospel.

*Who would not bless, for this, the Gift of Speech?
And in the Tongue's Beneficence be rich?*

This is likewise the Efficient of *Music*. It is soft as the Lyre, or shrill as the Trumpet; it can warble as the Lute, or resound like the Organ. Connecting the Sweetness of its Melody, with the Solemnities of Devotion, We tune the spiritual Song, and raise the sacred Anthem. We sooth the Cares, and beguile the Toils of Life: We imitate the Angelic Choirs, and anticipate, in some Degree, their celestial Joys.—As the Tongue requires full Scope, and an easy Play, it is lodged in an ample Cavity; and surrounded with Reservoirs of Spittle, always ready to distil the lubricating Dews. It moves under a concave Roof, which serves as a *Sounding-board*

We choose to follow the popular Opinion, so neatly described by the Poet,

Dædala Lingua,

Lingua figuratrix Verborum, Opifexque Loquelæ.

Anti-Lucret.

* The articulating Tongue is called *Our Glory*, Psal. lvii. 8. And such indeed it is, when devoted to *these* Purposes. It is then a Distinction, not only of Man from the brutal Herd, but of the Righteous from the Congregation of the Ungodly. It is then like *choice Silver*, or as a *Tree of Life*.

board to the Voice; giving it much the same additional Vigour and Grace, as the Shell of a Violin adds to the Language of the Strings.

Wife—wonderfully wise, and eminently gracious, is the Regulation both of *spontaneous* and *involuntary* Motion. Was this Regulation reversed, what deplorable Inconveniencies would take place; nay, what unavoidable Ruin must ensue!—*Deplorable Inconveniencies*; if the Discharges of the Bowels, or Evacuations of the Bladder, were quite independent on our Leave. *Unavoidable Ruin*; if the Action of the Heart, required the Co-operation of our Thoughts; or the Business of Respiration, waited for the Concurrence of our Will.

The Will, in some Cases, has not so much as a single Vote. In others, She *determines* and *commands*, like an absolute Sovereign; nor is there a Monarch upon Earth so punctually obeyed, as this Queen of the human System. If She but intimate her Pleasure, the Spirits run, they fly, to execute her Orders; to stretch the Arm, or close the Hand; to furrow the Brow with Frowns, or dimple the Cheek with Smiles,—How *easily*, as well as *punctually*, are these Orders carried into Execution! To turn the Screw, or work the Lever, is laborious and wearisome. But We move the Vertebrae, with all their appendent Chambers; We advance the Leg, with the whole incumbent Body; We rise from our Seat; We spring from the Ground; and, though much Force is exerted, though a very considerable Weight is raised, We meet with no Difficulty, We complain of no Fatigue.

That all this should be effected, without any Toil, and by a *bare Act* of the Will, is very surprising. But that

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that the various Motions should be made, renewed, continued, even while We remain *entirely* ignorant of the *Manner*, in which they are performed, this is still more astonishing.—Who can play so much as a *single* Tune upon the Spinnet, without learning the Difference of the Keys, or studying the Rudiments of Music? Impossible! Yet the Mind of Man touches *every* Spring of the human Machine, with the most masterly Skill; though She knows nothing at all, concerning the Nature of her Implements, or the Process of her Operations.—We walk, We run, We leap; We throw Ourselves into a Variety of Postures, and go through a Multitude of Exercises; yet are utterly unable to say, Which Nerve should be active; which Muscle should swell; or which Tendon approximate, in order to produce any one of these Effects.

Put a *German* Flute into the Hand even of a sensible Person: without a Master to instruct Him, He is at a Loss to make the Instrument speak: much less is He able to sink and soften the Sound, to exalt and extend the Note just as He pleases.—Yet We are self-taught in the Method of *forming*, *regulating*, and *varying* the Voice. Naturally, and with unpremeditated Fluency, We give it the languishing Cadence of Sorrow, or the sprightly Airs of Joy; the low faltering Accents of Fear, or the elevated Tone and rapid Sallies of Anger.

The Eye of a Rustic, who has no Notion of Optics, or any of its Laws, shall *lengthen* and *shorten* its Axis; *dilate* and *contract* its Pupil, without the least Hesitation, and with the utmost Propriety: adapting itself, even with mathematical Exactness, to the particular Distance of Objects, and the different De-

grees of Light. By which Means, it performs some of the most curious Experiments in the improved *Newtonian* Philosophy, without the least Knowledge of the Science, or so much as any Consciousness of of its own Dexterity.

I can never sufficiently admire this Multiplicity of animated Organs; their finished Form; their faultless Order; and the exquisite Regulation of all their Movements. Yet I must confess myself struck with greater Admiration at the Power, the *truly mysterious* Power and Sway, which the Soul exercises over the Whole. Ten thousand Reins are put into her Hand. She is not acquainted with their Office, their Use, or their Name. She has not learnt so much as to distinguish one from another. Nevertheless, she manages all, conducts all, without the least Perplexity or the least Irregularity: nay, with a Promptitude, a Consistency, and a Speed, which nothing else can equal!

Upon the Whole — Great Reason had *Euripides* to call the human Body,

Σωφρ τεκνον καλον ποικιλμω.

I believe, the preceding Observations will justify us, if we give a fuller Meaning to the Poet, and translate his Words—*The inimitably fine Workmanship, of a great, supreme, unerring ARTIST.* Or, as *Virgil* speaks, with a Pertinency and a Spirit, which epitomizes all I have said, and expresses all I would say; This bodily Structure is indeed—*Non enarrabile Textum* *.

* That is, A Structure, not barely correct, or highly finished, but (as *Theron* has elsewhere expressed it) beyond Description curious.

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Asp. Wonderfully, I perceive, and fearfully are we made *!—Made of such complicated Parts; each so correctly fashioned, and all so exactly arranged †; every one executing such curious Functions, and many of them operating in so mysterious a Manner; as may justly render Us a *Wonder to Ourselves*.—Since Health depends upon so many minute Requisites; upon such a numerous Assemblage of moving Organs, since a single Secretion stopped, may destroy the salutary Temperature of the Fluids; or a single Wheel clogged, may put an End to the vital Motion of the Solids: with what holy *Fear, should We pass the Time of our Sojourning Here below ‡!* Trusting, for continual Preservation, not merely on our own Care; not merely on alimentary Recruits; but on that Omnipotent Hand, which formed the admirable Machine. That the same Hand, which prepared the Pullies, and hung on the Weights, may daily wind up the Wheels. May never cease to superintend their Agency, and support our Being ||.

When

* Psal. cxxxix. 14.

† St. Paul's Language on the Subject is exceedingly beautiful and expressive, *Συναρμοσμένοι καὶ Συμβιβασμένοι.* Eph. iv. 16. The several Parts most nicely adapted to each other, and most perfectly *harmonizing* with the Whole. All associated with that Propriety, and connected with that Firmness, which are the very Foundation of Symmetry, Vigour, and Agility.—Both the Images used by the Apostle are comprehended in *one Hebrew Word*, אָפְּרַיִט *aptavit, stabilivit.* Job xxxi. 15.

‡ 1 Pet. i. 17.

|| Agreeably to that philosophical Maxim, *Creatio & Conservatio eadem est Actio*: and to those scriptural Acknowledgments, It is GOD, who holdeth our Soul in Life; He is the Length of our Days; his Visitation preserveth our Spirit.

When We consider the extensive Contrivance, and delicate Mechanism—What Plans of Geometry *, have been laid; what Operations † of Chemistry, are performed; in a Word, what Miracles of Art and Elegance are executed; in order to furnish Us with the necessary Recruits, and the several Delights of Life—Is there not abundant Reason to cry out, with the same inspired Writer; “*How dear are thy Counsels unto me, O GOD! Thy Counsels of creating Wisdom! Thou hast not been sparing, but even lavish of thy artificial and elaborate Designs. Thou hast omitted no Expedient, which might establish my Ease; enlarge my Comfort; and promote, yea complete my bodily Happiness!*” And is not this a most endearing Obligation, to present our Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to GOD ‡?

Should We not, every One, acknowledge with David? *Thy Hands have made me, and fashioned me—pray with David? O give me spiritual Understanding and godly Zeal—and resolve with David? that I may learn and keep thy Commandments* ||? “*What Thou, LORD, hast, with so much Curiosity contrived, with so much Accuracy framed, and*

* In the Muscles alone, says Mr. RAY, there seems to be more Geometry, than in all the artificial Engines in the World.

† Plans, Operations.—*Job*, speaking of the human Structure, uses a Word expressive of both these Ideas. *Thy Hands have made me*, says our Translation. But the Original עָבַד signifies abundantly more. It is applied to Artificers, who undertake some curious and elaborate Work; which costs them much Study, and great Pains. Much Study, to plan; and great Pains, to execute. *Job* x. 8.

‡ Rom. xii. 1.

|| Psal. cxix. 73.

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“with so much Liberality adorned, I would fain
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 “debase to the Drudgery of Satan, nor prostitute
 “to the Slavery of my Lusts, those Members and
 “those Faculties, on which Thou hast bestowed
 “so much divine Cost and heavenly Skill. Let
 “them all be *Servants of Righteousness*, and Instru-
 “ments of Holiness. Let them all be *Vessels of*
 “*Honour*; sanctified and * meet for their indulgent
 “CREATOR’s Service. That I may glorify
 “the great AUTHOR of Existence, *with my*
 “*Body and with my Spirit*, which are, as to Work-
 “manship, Property, and Redemption, wholly
 “his†.”

Ther. With my Spirit—Ay; what is this Mansion
 of Flesh, though so exquisitely wrought, compared
 with that sublime and immortal Inhabitant, which
 resides within?

— *That intellectual Being;*
Those Thoughts, which wander through Eternity †!

This Consideration inclines me to think, that, if
 the *Casket* be so highly polished, the *Jewel* cannot
 be so excessively coarse, as my *Aspasio*’s Doctrine of
 original Corruption supposes.

Asp. I perceive your Aim, *Theron*. But must beg
 leave, at present, to decline all Overtures for a Dis-
 pute. If my Arguments have failed, your Descrip-
 tion has answered its End.—I cannot suffer my
 Thoughts to be diverted from a Subject, which is so
 very engaging, yet so rarely discussed. I have such

* 2 Tim. ii. 21.

† 1 Cor. vi. 20.

‡ MILTON.

a strong Desire to recollect and retain what has been observed, that even *your* Conversation will, at this Juncture, lose its Relish. Here therefore I put a Period to our Discourse, and must break away from your Company, in order to ruminate and digest my Notions, in some sequestred lonely Walk. Unless You will permit me, before I retire, to make one Remark.—And let it not startle my Friend, if I venture to say, That, amidst all his curious Observations, He has forgot the principal Circumstance of *Honour* and *Excellence*, which dignifies the human Body.

Ther. I have omitted many fine and admirable Properties, I confess. But sure I have not forgot the *principal* and most distinguishing.

Ass. You need not be displeased with Yourself. It argues no Defect in your Dissertation. The Circumstance I have in my View, could never be discovered, by following the Dissecting-knife. It is learnt, not from *Cheselden's* Draughts, or the Tables of *Albinus*; but from the Word of Revelation. What I mean, is This—The human Body was exalted to a most intimate and *personal Union*, with the eternal SON of GOD. He who decorated the Heaven with Stars, and crowned the Stars with Lustre; *HE vouchsafed to be made Flesh* *, and was found in Fashion as a Man †.—Nay, this is, even now, the Apparel of that majestic and adorable PERSON. He is clothed with our Nature; He wears our very Limbs; and appears in the Dress of Humanity, even at the Right-hand of GOD, and at the Head of all the heavenly Hosts.

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* John i. 14.

† Phil. ii. 8.

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What think You of another Privilege, mentioned by the Apostle? *Your Bodies are the Temple of the HOLY GHOST* *. Not your Souls only, but your very Bodies, are the Shrine, in which *the High and Holy ONE*, *that inhabiteth Eternity*, condescends to dwell. HE, who sitteth between the Cherubim, and walketh in the Circuit of the Skies, is pleased to sanctify these earthly Tenements, and to choose them for his own Habitation. Is not this a much grander Embellishment, than all their matchless Contrivance and masterly Workmanship? Just as the *Rod* which budded, and the *Manna* which was miraculously preserved; the sacred *Oracle* of *Urim* and *Thummim*; with the *Cloud* of *Glory* covering the *Mercy-seat*; were a much more eminent Distinction to *Solomon's Temple*, than the most heightened Beauties of Architecture.

Nor must I omit the Dignity—the transcendent and amazing Dignity—which is reserved for these Systems of Flesh, at the *Resurrection* of the Just. They will then be refined and improved, into the most perfect State, and the most beauteous Form. Surpassing whatever is resplendent and amiable in the most ornamental Appearances of material Nature. They will be purer than the unspotted Firmament; brighter than the most brilliant Stars; and, which exceeds all Parallel, which comprehends all Perfection, they will *be made like unto CHRIST's glorious Body* †. Like that incomparably glorious Body, which the blessed *JESUS*

VOL. II. P wears

* 1 Cor. vi. 19.

† Phil. iii. 21.

wears, in his celestial Kingdom, and on his triumphant Throne *.

When We add all these *magnificent Prerogatives*, which are revealed in Scripture, to all those *inimitable Niceties*, which are displayed by Anatomists, what Thankfulness, what Admiration, can equal such a Profusion of Favours?

*When all thy Mercies, O my GOD,
My rising Soul surveys,
Transported with the View I'm lost
In Wonder, Love, and Praise!*

* This is a Circumstance, rather inexpressibly marvellous. Let the Christian, who, like the Writer of this Note, languishes under a sickly Constitution, think upon it with peculiar Attention, and with peculiar Pleasure.—The Body of *CHRIST* is, if I mistake not, the noblest and most finished Part of the material Creation.—To have formed it in the Womb of the Virgin, is, perhaps, the strongest Proof of the Omnipotence and Divinity of the blessed *SPIRIT*.—This Body stands, as the First-born in the Family of *GOD*, possessing the Excellency of Dignity and the Excellency of Power.—In the Mount of Transfiguration, it “ shone like the Sun.” To *Saul*, in his Journey towards *Damascus*, it shone “ above the Brightness of the Sun.” And who can tell how illustriously it will shine; when the Man *CHRIST JESUS* comes in the Clouds of Heaven, and takes his Seat on the great Tribunal?—But this We can tell; of this We are sure; that these Bodies of ours; though now (*Cumala res tantum-otus*, Phil. iii. 21.) enfeebled by Sickness, polluted by Sin, and soon to be degraded in the Dust; that these very Bodies will, at our *REDEEMER*'s Appearing, be exalted to the same State of Purity and Perfection, the same Life of Immortality and Glory, with his own.—Blessed be *GOD* for this delightful Hope! No Restorative so efficacious. No Cordial so sovereign.

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DIALOGUE XIII.

THE Morning had been wet. At Noon the Rain ceased. But the Heavens still continued gloomy.—Towards Evening, a gentle eastern Gale sprung up; which dissipated the dead Calm, and cleared the Face of the Sky.—The Sun, which had been muffled in Clouds, dropped the Veil. Disengaged from the dusky Shroud, He shone forth with *peculiar Splendor*. His Beams, endeared by their late Suspension, were doubly welcome, and produced unusual Gaiety.

At this Juncture, *Theron* and *Aspasio* walked abroad. They walked alternately on the Terraces; one of which was opposite to the Country, the other contiguous to the Parterre.—Where the Gales, impregnated with the *freshest* Exhalations of Nature, breathed the Smell of Meads, and Fields, and Groves.—Or else, shaking the Clusters of Roses, and sweeping the Beds of Fragrance, they flung *Balm* and *Odours* through the Air.

At a Distance, were heard the Bleatings of the Flock, mingled with the Lowings of the milky Mothers. While more melodious Music, warbled from the neighbouring Boughs, and spoke aloud the Joy of their feathered Inhabitants.—And not only spoke their Joy, but spread an *additional* Charm over all the Landscape. For, amidst such Strains of native Harmony, the breathing Perfumes smell more sweet; the streaming Rills shine more clear; and the universal Prospect looks more gay.

Then was experienced, what *Milton* so delicately describes;

*As when, from Mountain-tops the dusky Clouds
Ascending, while the North Wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heav'n's chearful Face, the lowring Element
Scowls o'er the darken'd Landscape Snow or Sho'wr:
If chance the radiant Sun with farewell Sweet
Extend his Evening Beam, the Fields revive,
The Birds their Notes renew, and bleating Herds
Attest their Joy, that Hill and Valley rings.*

With Wonder and Delight our Friends observed, both the exquisite Beauty, and the immense Magnificence of Things.—They were struck with the most profound Veneration of that Almighty MAJESTY; who hung the Sun in Vaults of Azure, and clothed his Orb with Robes of Lustre. Whose *Right-hand spanneth the Heavens* *, and stretcheth them out as a Tent, for innumerable Creatures, Worlds, Systems to dwell in †.—Charmed they were, at the Consideration of the CREATOR's boundless Beneficence. Who lifts up the Light of his Countenance,

* Isai. xlviii. 13.

† Isai. xl. 22.

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DIALOGUE XIII. 229

nance, and Joy is shed; who opens his munificent Hand, and Plenty is poured, throughout all the Regions of the Universe. Infomuch, that even inanimate Beings seem to smile under a Sense of the Blessings: and though they find not a Tongue to praise, yet speak their Acclamations by their gladdened Looks.

Ther. How very different, *Aspasio*, is this delightful Appearance of Things, from your ill-favoured Doctrine of original Guilt, and original Depravity! Your Doctrine is a Contradiction to the Language of Nature. Nature says, through all her Works, "That GOD is good, and Men are made to be *happy*." Whereas, your Opinion would turn the whole World into a vast Hospital, and make every individual Person, a *Leper* or a *Lazarus*.

Asp. I join with my *Theron*, and with universal Nature, in bearing witness to the Goodness of our GOD. And nothing, I am persuaded, displays it more, nothing manifests so much, as the Doctrine of our *Fall* in *Adam*, connected with our *Recovery* in *CHRIST*.—Only in one Particular I am obliged to dissent. It is not my Opinion that *would make*, but the Sin of our Forefather which *has made*, the whole World an Infirmary, and every individual Person a *Leper*.

Ther. At this Rate, You would croud into that single Act of Disobedience, Evils more numerous, and more fatal, than the Plagues which were lodged in *Pandora's Box*, or the Troops which were stowed in the *Trojan Horse*.

Asp. Far more numerous, and infinitely more pernicious.—The Fable of *Pandora's Box* seems t

have been a Shred of the Doctrine, picked up by the Heathen Wits, and fashioned according to their sportive Fancy. This would, if there was any Occasion for such weak Assistance, bring in the *Pagan* Theology, as a subsidiary Evidence to our Cause. —The *Trojan* Horse poured Ruin upon a single City; but the primitive Transgression entailed Misery upon all Generations.

Ther. You have advanced this heavy Charge pretty strenuously, I must confess. But without descending to Facts, or appealing to Experience. All the Invectives are *general* and *declamatory*, none pointing and particular.

Asp. It is easy, my dear Friend, too easy to draw up a particular Bill of Indictment; and not only to *specify* the Facts, but to *demonstrate* the Charge. Experience, sad Experience will furnish Us with a Cloud of Witnesses, and prove my Remonstrances to be more than Invectives.

Were we to dissect human Nature, as, in our last Conference, You treated the animal System, we should find the Leprosy of Corruption, spreading itself through our whole Frame. For which Reason, it is styled, by an inspired Writer, “The Old “Man*.”—*Old*; because, in its Commencement, it was early as the Fall; and, in its Communication to Individuals, is coeval with their Being.—*Man*; because it has tainted the Body, infected the Soul, and disordered the whole Person.

St. Paul, describing a profligate Conversation, speaks in this remarkable Manner; *fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind* †. By the Desires of the Flesh, He means those irregular Inclinations, which

* Rom. vi. 6.

† Eph. ii. 3.

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which correspond with the *animal* Part of our Constitution. By the Desires of the Mind, He denotes those evil Propensities, which are more immediately seated in the *intellectual* Faculties. And by both, He very strongly expresses the *total* Depravation of our Nature.

Ther. What You call evil Propensities, I am apt to think, are not really sinful, but appointed for the *Tryal* of our Virtue.—Nay, since they are confessedly *natural*, they cannot be in themselves evil. Because, upon this Supposition, GOD, who is the Author of our Nature, would be the Author also of our Sin.

Asp. Then You imagine, that Propensities to Evil, are void of Guilt. This is the *Popish* Notion, but neither the *Mosaic* nor the *Apostolic* Doctrine.—In the Law of *Moses* it is written, *Thou shalt not covet* *. The Divine LEGISLATOR prohibits, not only the iniquitous Practice, but the evil Desire.—The Apostle gives it in charge to the *Colossians*, *Mortify your Members, which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affection, and, which is the Source of all, evil Concupiscence* †. Now, must not *that* be sinful, which is contrary to GOD's holy Nature, and a Transgression of his holy Law? Can *that* be free from Guilt, which We are commanded to mortify? Which, if not mortified, denominates Us Children of Disobedience, and subjects Us to the Wrath ‡ of GOD?

Though these Propensities are confessedly natural, they may be evil notwithstanding. The sacred Writers represent what is natural, as contrary to what is spiritual. Instead of commending it, as

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innocent;

* Exod. xx. 17.

† Col. iii. 5.

‡ Col. iii. 6.

innocent; they condemn it, as *foolish* *, *base* †, and *criminal* ‡.—Neither does this make the AUTHOR of our Nature, the Author of our Sin. But it proves, that our Nature has sustained a destructive Blast: that it is quite different from its original State: that, what is spoken of the *Israelitish* People, is applicable to the *human* Race; I *planted Thee a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed: how then art Thou turned into the degenerate Plant of a strange Vine* || ?

However, let Us observe your Proposal: dwell no longer on general Hints, but descend to a particular Examination. As our Examination will chiefly respect the Soul, let me enquire, What are her principal Faculties?

Ther. The *Understanding*, the *Will*, and the *Affections*. These are the most distinguishing Powers, which that Queen of the human Oeconomy retains in her Service.—These, like the several Distributions of some ample River, run through the whole Man; to quicken, fertilize, and enrich all his Conversation.—But You represent them bitter, as the Waters of *Marah*; unwholesome, as the Streams of *Jericho*; noxious, as the Pottage prepared for the Sons of the Prophets.

Ans. Nor is this a Misrepresentation. For, such they really are; till divine Grace, like *Moses's* Wood §, like *Elisba's* Salt †, or the Meal ** cast in by that holy Man of GOD, *sweeten* them, *heal* them, and render their Operations *salutary*.

The Understanding claims our first Regard.—This, however qualified to serve the Purposes of civil

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

|| Jer. ii. 21.

21, 22.

† 2 Pet. ii. 12.

§ Exod. xv. 25.

** 2 Kings iv. 41.

† Eph. ii. 3.

† 2 Kings ii.

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D I A L O G U E XIII. 233

vil Life, is unable to discover the Truths, in which *Wisdom* consists; or to form the Tempers, from which *Happiness* flows.

Let Us take our Specimen, not from the uncultivated Savages of *Afric*, but from the politest Nation in *Europe*.—The *Grecians* piqued themselves on their intellectual Accomplishments. They termed all the rest of Mankind *Barbarians*. Yet, even these Sons of Science, *professing themselves wise, were, in Fact, egregious Fools* *.—Not to enumerate the shocking Immoralities, which the Poets ascribed to their Deities. Not to insist upon the gross Idolatries, which the common People practised in their Worship. Even their *Philosophers*, the most improved and penetrating Geniuses, were unacquainted with the very *first Principle* † of true Religion. Even they could not pronounce, with an unfaultering Tongue ‡, “ That GOD is ONE.”

Ther.

* Rom. i. 22.

† *The first of all the Commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The LORD our GOD is ONE LORD; and Thou shalt love the LORD, &c. Mark xii. 29.* From which it appears, that the *Unity* of the GODHEAD, is the Foundation of all the divine Commandments, and of all human Worship. That it is impossible to give the LORD the Honour due unto his Name, unless We regard Him as the Possessor of *all* Perfection; to whom no Being is equal, or second, or in any Degree comparable.

‡ *Unfaultering*—For though, in *Plato's Book of Laws*, We meet with ο Θεος—τὸ Θεον—τοῦ Θεου again and again; yet He soon departs from this *sound Speech*, and relapses into the Language of Idolatry.

A learned and ingenious Friend, would fain have *Socrates* exempted from this Charge.—I wish, I could gratify his benevolent Temper, and spare that amiable Philosopher. But, however justly He may express Himself on some Occasions, at other Times He wavers; He evidently

Ther. With regard to the Philosophers, the Prejudices of a wrong Education, might pervert their Judgment; or, in compliance with the prevailing Mode, they might adopt Customs, and assent to Notions, which they did not thoroughly approve.

Asp. A poor Compliment this to their Integrity! Had I been their Advocate, methinks, I would have given up the Sagacity of my Clients, rather than their Fidelity to the Cause of GOD and of Truth.

With reference to the *supreme GOOD*, they were equally at a loss.—There's not one among all the inferior Creatures; not even the crawling Worm,

dently revolts; and is most pitiably inconsistent with Himself.—Even in his excellent Conference with *Aristodemus*, where He argues admirably well for the *Existence*, He cannot steadily adhere to the *Unity* of the GOD-HEAD.—Nay; in his last solemn Apology before his Judges, He publicly *renounces* the Truth; declares, that He worshipped those Gods, which were acknowledged by his Countrymen; worshipped them, and no other; on the same Festivals, at the same Altars, and in the same (*idolatrous*) Manner.—*No other*: these are his Words, Οὐκ ἄρα εἰς ἑνὲν ἀνὴρ Διὸς, καὶ Ἡρᾶς, καὶ τῶν ἑνὶ τέλει Θεῶν, εἰς δύο καὶ τισὶ κακίους Δαίμονας, εἰς ὁμῆν, εἰς ὀνομαζέων ἄλλας Θεάς ἀναπέμναι. SOCRAT. Memor. Lib. I. c. i. Sect. II, 24.

Let none conclude, from this or any other Passage, That We would consign over all the Heathens to Damnation. This is as far from our Intention, as it is foreign to the Argument. We are only like Witnesses, summoned to give in our Evidence. From which it appears, that the very best among the *Gentiles*, were ignorant of the true GOD; or, if *they knew Him*, in any Degree, *they glorified Him not as GOD; but became vain in their Imagination*, and vile in their Worship.—*Whether* they shall obtain Mercy, or *which* of them shall be Objects of divine Clemency, is left *solely* to the Determination of their supreme, unerring, righteous JUDGE:

—Non nostrum est tantas componere Lites. VIRG.

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Worm, or the buzzing Fly; but perceives what is *beneficial*, and pursues it; discerns what is *pernicious*, and avoids it. Yonder Caterpillar, whose Nourishment is from one particular Species of Vegetables, never makes a wrong Application to another: never is allured by the Fragrance of the Auricula, or dazzled by the Splendor of the Tulip; but constantly distinguishes, and as constantly adheres to the Leaf, which affords her the proper Food. So *sagacious* are the meanest Animals, with relation to their respective Happiness! While the most celebrated of the Heathen Sages were, on a Subject of the very same Import, mere *Dotards*.—*Varro* reckons up no less than two hundred and eighty-eight different Opinions, concerning the true Good; and not one of them derives it from the true Source. I mean a Conformity to the ever-blessed GOD, and an Enjoyment of his infinite Perfections.

If, on these *leading* Points, they were so erroneous; no Wonder, that they were bewildered in their other Researches. No Wonder, that, being thus *foolish*, they were also *disobedient*; that, *having lost* * *their Way* to Happiness, they took every Deceiver for a Guide, and *served divers Lusts and Pleasures*.

Ther. We are not enquiring into the Circumstances of this or that particular Nation; but into the State of Mankind in general.

Asp. Cast your Eye, *Theron*, upon those Swallows. They shoot themselves, with surprising Rapidity, through

* *Tit.* iii. 3. The Original is *πλανωμενοι*.—The Case of the *Grecians* and *Romans* was touched upon, pag. 120. But the true Decision of this Enquiry, and the true Character of those People, may be seen, *Rom.* i. 21, 22, &c. to the End of the Chapter.

through the Air. I should take them for so many living Arrows, were it not for their shifting, winding, wanton Motions.—Are not these what You call *Birds of Passage*?

Ther. These, and some other of the feathered Race, are our constant Visitants in Summer; but leave Us, at the Approach of Winter. As soon as the Weather becomes cold, they assemble themselves in a Body; and concert Measures, for their Departure. *Who* convenes the Assembly—*What* Debates arise—Or *how* they communicate the Resolution taken—I do not presume to say. This is certain, that not one of them dislodges, till the Affair is settled, and the Proclamation has been published. Not a single Loiterer is to be seen, when the Troops are preparing for their Decampment; nor a single Straggler to be found, when they have once begun their March.—Having finished their Journey through the Land, their Wings become a sort of Sails*; and they launch, though not into, yet over the Ocean. Without any *Compass*, to regulate their Course; or any *Chart*, to make Observations in their Voyage; they arrive safely at the desired Shore. And what is still more extraordinary, they always find the readiest Way, and the shortest Cut.

Asp. The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed Times: and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the Time of their Coming: but my People know not the Judgment of their GOD†. The young Ones of those Birds perceive, how absolutely necessary it is, to forsake the Land of their Nativity, and travel in quest of milder Climes.—But our Offspring, even when their Minds begin to open, are brutish in
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* *Remigie Alarum.* VIRG.

† Jer. viii. 7.

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their Knowledge *. Born they are, and too long continue, *like the wild Ass's Colt* †. Not only quite destitute of heavenly wisdom, but stupid to apprehend it, and averse to receive it. *As soon as they are born, they go astray, and—*

*Ther. Go astray—*To what is this owing, but to the *bad Examples* they behold? They catch the wayward Habit, from the irregular Conversation of others.

Assp. Is not this a Confirmation of my Point? Why are they *yielding Clay* ‡ to each bad Impression?—*Case-hardened Steel* to every edifying Application?—To do Mischief, to be proud of their Apparel, to seek Revenge ||, they are not teachable only, but self-taught. Whereas, if You would affect them with a Sense of divine Things, or bring them acquainted with GOD their Maker; *Line must be upon Line, Line upon Line: Precept must be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept: Here a little, and*

* Jer. x. 14.

† *Job xi. 12.* How keenly is this Comparison pointed!—Like the *Ass's*, an Animal remarkable for its Stupidity, even to a Proverb.—Like the *Ass's Colt*, which must be still more egregiously stupid than the Dam.—Like the *wild Ass's Colt*, which is not only blockish, but stubborn and intractable; neither possesses valuable Qualities by Nature, nor will easily receive them by Discipline.—The Image, in the Original, is yet more strongly touched. The comparative Particle *like* is not in the *Hebrew*; *born a wild Ass's Colt*; or, as We should say in *English*, *a mere wild, &c.*

‡ *Cereus in Vitium flecti.*

|| This is evident, from the Success of a Method, frequently but injudiciously used to quiet Children. The Method I mean, of *beating* the Thing, which has raised their Indignation.

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and there a little *.—What farther corroborates my Sentiment, is, That all these tender Toils of Eru- dition are generally unwelcome; are too often un- successful; nay, will always be ineffectual, with- out the Concurrence of Almighty Grace.

Besides, *Theron*, if this Propensity to Evil be ob- servable in *all* Children, it seems more than probable, that the unhappy Bias is derived from their Parents, rather than caught from their Neighbours; and owing, not to the Influence of external Examples, but to a Principle of internal Corruption †.—Neglect the Education of Children, and You are sure to have their Manners evil, their Lives unprofitable. Nay, only remit your Endeavours, and they lose what has been gained: they start aside, like a broken Bow ‡. And wherefore this? Why do they not, without the

Rules

* A great Critic has laid down the following Rule, to be observed in fine Writing;

*'Tis not enough no Harshness gives Offence,
The Sound must be an Echo to the Sense.*

POPE'S *Essay on Criticism*.

Never was this delicate Maxim more nicely exemplified, than in the above-cited Passage of *Isaiab*, Chap. xxviii. 13.—Another Instance of the same kind occurs in the seventh Verse. Where the Language seems to mimic the *reeling, straggling, giddy* Motions of a Drunkard: while it iterates and reiterates the Idea; expresses the same Thing, in a different and still different Manner; with an appa- rent, and, in this Case, a significant *Circumrotation* of Words.

† St. Paul confesses, that He and his Fellow-saints were, in their unconverted State, depraved: and this, not *διὰ τὴν ἐξω*, by Custom or Habit, but *φύσιν*, by Nature. Eph. ii. 3.

‡ ————— *Ad Mores Natura recurrit
Damnatos, fixa & mutari nescia.*

JUVEN.

Rules of Discipline or Lessons of Instruction, *spontaneously* addict themselves to the Exercise of every Virtue? Just as the Cygnets, in yonder Canal, spontaneously take to the Element of Water, and the Act of Swimming.

That Bed, in the Garden before Us, will suggest the Reason. It has been digged and dressed this very Day. It now lies smooth and clean. Not a single Weed appears on its Surface. Yet, how certainly will it, in a very little Time, produce a plenteous Growth of those vegetable Nuisances?—Whence can this proceed? No Hand will sow them. No Wish will invite them. But the *Seeds*, though unperceived by any Eye, are *already* there. Disseminated by the Winds, they have mixed themselves with the Mold, and are sunk into the Soil.—So, just so, it is with our Children. The Seeds of Iniquity are *within* * them; and, unless proper Diligence be exerted by Us, unless gracious Assistance be vouchsafed from above, they will assuredly spring up; over-run their Souls; and dishonour their Lives.

Ther. Let Us leave the Children, and make *Men* the Subject of our Enquiry.

Asp. In this Respect, *Theron*,

Men are but Children of a larger Growth.

We may leave the Vest or Hanging-sleeve Coat, but We shall still find the Follies of the Child.—In *Youth*,

* Whoever chooses to examine the Seeds, the poisonous Seeds, which are lodged in this *Nursery* of all Evil, may see a Sample of them in our LORD's Description. *Mark* vii. 20, 21, 22, 23. Where He characterizes the Heart, not barely of the hypocritical Pharisee, or the abandoned Publican, but of Mankind in general.

Youth, what low Ambition, and Fondness for despicable Pleasures.—In *Manhood*, what a keen Pursuit of transitory Wealth; yet what a cold Inattention to GOD and Holiness!—Men, and Men too of enlarged Understanding, whose Penetration on other Subjects, is piercing as the Eagle's Sight, are, on the most important Points, blind as the incaverned Mole.

Ther. What! is the Understanding like the most dim-sighted Animal, when lodged in her darkest Retirement? That sublime Faculty of the Soul; which lends her Eye to all the rest; sits at the Helm, and directs their Motions!

Asp. You remember, I presume, that beautiful Passage in *Milton* *; which Mr. *Addison* so highly admires, and so judiciously illustrates. The Passage I mean, where the Archangel *Michael* comes down, to advertise *Adam* of future Events, and to execute the Sentence of divine Justice.

Ther. I remember it perfectly well.—In the East, the great Light of Day lies under an Eclipse. In the West, a bright Cloud descends, more luminous than the Sun itself. The whole Theatre of Nature is darkened, that this glorious Machine may appear in all its Magnificence and Beauty.—From this radiant Meteor, the *Potentate* of *Heaven* alights; and advances, with a majestic Stateliness, to meet *Adam*.

Asp. Should You see such an august Personage, alighting from his splendid Chariot, and walking amidst the thronged Streets of a City?—Should You behold every One intent upon his Business or Diversions; struck with no *Awe*; paying no reverential

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Regard to this celestial Visitant; what would You think?

Ther. I should certainly suspect, that some superior Power had drawn a *Veil* over their Sight, and hid this wonderful Spectacle from their View.

Asp. Such is really the Case with all Mankind by Nature, and with the Generality of People, during their whole Life. — GOD, the infinitely great GOD, is in every Place. Yet how few *advert* to his Presence! — All Nature exhibits Him to their Senses; yet, perhaps, He is not in any of their Thoughts.

The Sun, clothed in transcendent Brightness, most illustriously displays his MAKER's Glory. The Moon, though drest in fainter Beams, has Lustre enough to shew Us the adorable DEITY, and his marvelous Perfections. The Stars, fixed as they are at an unmeasurable Distance, and *lessened* almost to a Point, come in with their Evidence, and *magnify* their CREATOR to a gazing but unaffected World.

The Air *whispers* his Clemency in the gentle, the refreshing Gales of Spring. If We take no Notice of this soft persuasive Address, the Tone is elevated; the Majesty of JEHOVAH *sounds aloud*, in roaring Winds, and rending Storms. Yet *both* Expedients fail. Man is like the deaf Adder, that stoppeth her Ears. He refuseth to hear the Voice of the Charmers, charm they never so sweetly, never so forcibly.

Each Flower, arrayed in Beauty, and breathing Perfume, courts our Affections for its infinitely amiable AUTHOR. — Not a Bird that sings among the Branches, nor a Brook that murmurs over the

Pebbles, but invites our Praise, or chides our Ingratitude.—All the Classes of Fruits deposit their Attestation on our Palates; yet seldom reach our Hearts. They give Us a Proof of the divine Benevolence; a Proof, as *undeniable* as it is pleasing, and too often as *ineffectual* also.

In short; the whole Creation is a Kind of magnificent Embassy from its Almighty LORD; deputed to proclaim *his Excellencies*, and demand our *Homage*. Yet, who has not disregarded the former, and with-held the latter?—How Few walk, as seeing HIM that is invisible, or have Fellowship with the FATHER of Spirits? Though, to walk before Him, is our *highest* Dignity; and to have Fellowship with Him, is our *only* Felicity?

Ther. This is owing to *Inattention*, rather than to any Blindness or Defect in Man's Understanding. The many Works of Genius, which have been produced in various Ages, are an abundant Proof of his intellectual Capacity.—Have not the Seas been traversed, and the Skies measured? Has not the Earth been disemboweled of its choicest Treasures; while its Surface is beautified with Towns, Cities, Palaces, innumerable?—What fine Arts are invented and exercised; and to what a Pitch of Perfection are they carried? Arts that seem, if not to exceed, at least to *rival* Nature.—It was the Understanding, which formed all these great Designs. It was the Understanding, which contrived the Means, and conducted the Execution.—And are not these unquestionable Evidences of her very superior Abilities?

Ans. Then she is like some great Empress, who conquers half the World, but is unable to rule Her-

self. Who extends her Regulations into foreign Climes, while her domestic Affairs are involved in Confusion.—Do You doubt the Reality of this Remark? Set Yourself to meditate upon the most interesting Truths. How *desultory*, how *incoherent* are your Thoughts?—Charge them to be collected. They disobey your Orders.—Rally the undisciplined Vagrants. Again they desert the Task.—Exert all your Power, and keep them close to their Business. Still they elude your Endeavours.

The other Day, I could not forbear smiling at a little Adventure of your youngest Son's. Some *Quick-silver*, which happened to be spilt upon the Floor, parted into several Globules. The shining Balls looked so prettily, he longed to make them his own. But when he offered to take them up, they slipped from his Hand. As often as he renewed the Attempt, so often He met with a Disappointment. The closer He strove to grasp them, the more speedily they escaped from his Fingers. He seemed, at first, to be amazed; then became quite angry, that the little *Fugitives* should so constantly *baffle* his repeated Efforts.—Thus unmanageable I very often find my own Thoughts. If yours are under no better Regimen, this may convince Us both, that all is not according to the original Creation.

We apply Ourselves to converse with the everlasting GOD in *Prayer*. Here, One would expect to have the Thoughts all Clearness, and all Composure. But Here *We are not sufficient of Ourselves, to think any Thing as of Ourselves* *. All those holy Ideas, which create Reverence, or strengthen Faith, or quicken Love, come from the FATHER of Lights.

Q²

Should

* 2 Cor. iii. 5.

Should HE withdraw His Influence, all will be dull, and dark, and dead. — It may be, We are somewhat enlivened in this sacred Exercise; before We are aware, perhaps in the very Midst of the solemn Office, our Attention is *dissipated*; and not dissipated only, but *scattered* to the Ends of the Earth. The GOD of all Glory is forsaken, and the Devotion paid to some senseless Foppery. A Malefactor, begging his Life at the Knees of his Sovereign; and discontinuing his Suit, in order to caress a *Lapdog*, or pursue a *Butterfly*, is but a faint Image of the Vanity which attends our devotional Services. — Reason, which ought to correct these Irregularities, is treated like the incredulous Lord; who, instead of controuling the unruly Multitude, was overborne by their Impetuosity, and trodden under Foot *.

Since then the Reins are struck out of our Hands, and We have lost the Rule over our own Faculties; surely, We are in a State different, very different from our primitive Constitution.

Ther. However insensible to *refined* Speculation, the Understanding, when *Interest* is in the Case, is apprehensive enough.

Ass. In temporal †, not in spiritual Affairs. — Your younger Brother, *Theron*, is a Merchant. We will suppose Him at the Sea-side; within a small Distance of the Vessel, on which a considerable Part of his Substance is embarked. We will suppose the Vessel in the utmost Distress; ready to founder with her Leaks, or to strike upon the Rocks. — If he discovers no Sign of Concern, calls in no Assistance

* 2 Kings vii. 17.

† Called therefore by the Apostle, *Fleshy Wisdom*, and opposed to the Grace of GOD. 2 Cor. i. 12.

from the Country; makes no Effort to *save* the Crew, and *secure* the Cargo; would You not think him bereaved of his Understanding, or deprived of his Sight?—Could You conceive a more favourable Opinion of his Eyes or his Intellect? If, instead of trying every Method to prevent a Shipwreck, He should amuse Himself with picking *Shells* from the Ocean, or drawing *Figures* on the Sand?

We, and every One of our Fellow-creatures, have an Interest in Jeopardy, unspeakably more precious, than all the rich Lading of a thousand Fleets. Our Souls, our immortal Souls, are exposed, every Day, every Hour, to the Peril of *everlasting Destruction*. Every Temptation is threatening to their endless Welfare, as a Ridge of craggy Rocks to a Ship that drives before the strongest Gale.—Yet, how unconcerned are Mankind? Where is their holy Fear? Where their godly Jealousy? Where their wakeful Circumspection? Rather, what a *gay Insensibility* is observable in their Behaviour? Or else, what a *lifeless Formality* prevails in their Supplications? Their Supplications to that Almighty BEING, who alone is able to save and to destroy.—Was not the human Understanding both darkened and besotted, We should see our Neighbours, We should feel Ourselves awakened, into much the same earnest Solicitude, as the Disciples expressed; when, perceiving the Waves boistrous, and their Bark sinking, they cried; *L O R D ! Save Us ! We perish !*

But alas! in Things of an unseen Nature, though of eternal Consequence, *Interest*, that habitual Darling of every Heart, loses its engaging Influence. Nay; when Eternity, all-important Eternity is at stake, even *Self-preservation* is scarce any longer a

governing Principle.—What can be more deplorable? And, if We admit not the Doctrine of original Corruption, what so unaccountable?

Ther. This, I must confess, is true, with regard to the unthinking Rabble. To them may be accommodated the Remark of *Augustus*. Who, when he saw some foreign Females, carrying Apes in their Arms instead of Infants, said to one of his Courtiers; “Have the Women of those Countries *no Children*, that they are so fond of such despicable Animals?”—The Vulgar are so immersed in secular Cares, that One might indeed be tempted to ask; “Have those People *no Souls*?” that Buying and Selling, Eating and Drinking, engross their whole Concern?—But Persons of Rank and Education, think in a more exalted Manner.

Asp. Do you then imagine, that an Elevation of Circumstances sets the Affections on Things above? Or, that it is the peculiar Infelicity of the *Vulgar*, to grovel in their Desires?—Gold, I believe, is more likely to increase, than to dissipate, the Fog on the intellectual Faculties. Abundance of Possessions, instead of disengaging the Heart, fasten it more inseparably to the Earth. Even superior Attainments in Learning, if not sanctified by Grace, serve only to render the Owner somewhat more refined in his Follies, or vainly to puff up his *fleshy Mind* *.—But Comparisons, between the various Classes of Mankind, are as useless as they are invidious. None, in either Condition, attend to the Things which make for their Peace, till they are awakened from their Lethargy, by the quickening SPIRIT of CHRIST. And even then We cannot but ob-

* Col. ii. 18.

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serve evident Indications of much *remaining* Blindness.

How apt are such Persons to mistake the Way of Salvation? To place their own Works for a Foundation of Hope, instead of *CHRIST*, the Rock of Ages? Thinking, by their own Performances to *win*, not seeking from unmerited Grace to *receive*, the Inheritance of eternal Glory. Which is more absurdly vain, than to offer Toys as an Equivalent for Thrones; or to dream of purchasing Diadems with a Mite.—They are also prone to misapprehend the Nature of Holiness. Are zealous to regulate the *external* Conduct, without attending to the Renovation of the *Heart*: in outward Forms elaborate; with respect to inward Sanctity, less if it all exact. A Labour just as preposterous, as to skin over the Surface of a Wound, while it festers at the Bottom, and consumes the Bone.

Give me Leave to ask, *Theron*; When our LORD declares, *Unless a Man be born again, He cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* *: when He speaks of *eating his Flesh*, and *drinking his Blood* †: when You hear or read of Union with the blessed *JESUS*, or Communion with the most high GOD: is there not a Cloud, if not total Darkness, on your Mind ‡? —How

* John iii. 3.

† John vi. 54.

‡ With regard to the Mysteries of *CHRIST*, the greatest Proficients are but *Obtuse acuti*, Dull even in their Acuteness.—What says the wise *Agur*? An invaluable Fragment of whose Works, is preserved in the Book of *Proverbs*. Surely, *I am more brutish than any Man, and have not the Understanding of a Man*: even though the following Verses bespeak the very singular Elevation and Extent of his Knowledge. *Prov. xxx. 2.*—Conformably to the Experience of this excellent Man, I have always observed,

—How erroneous was the *Psalmist* himself, in his Judgment concerning the divine Disposals? So foolish was I and ignorant, even as it were a Beast, or as the veriest Beast, before Thee.* —The Voice of Experience therefore will attest, what the Word of Revelation has averred; That the natural Man, be his intellectual Abilities ever so pregnant, or ever so improved, cannot know the Things of the SPIRIT of GOD †: He has no Sight to discern their Beauty; no Taste to relish their Sweetness. Nay, though they

observed, that the more enlightened People are, the more they lament their Ignorance; the more they pant after a continual Progress in heavenly Knowledge; the more they pray for clearer, still clearer Manifestations of the incomprehensible GOD, and his transcendently rich Grace in CHRIST JESUS.

* I question, whether *Aspasio's* Translation comes fully up to the Emphasis of the Original. The comparative Particle is omitted in the *Hebrew*. As softens and palliates the Matter. Therefore the *Psalmist*, to express the deepest Sense of his Ignorance, says, *I was a Beast*, yea, *the veriest Beast*, בְּחִמּוֹת, *Psalm* lxxiii. 22.—In Figures equally strong, and equally abasing, is this Blindness of our fallen Nature described, by the Writers of the New Testament. Men, in their natural State, are Children of Darkness; nursed up by Ignorance, and totally subject to its Influence. *1 Thess.* v. 5. They walk in Darkness; it is the very Element, in which they live and move. *John* xii. 35. Nay; they are not only in Darkness, but Darkness itself. *Eph.* v. 8. Their Souls are like the Region, which *Job*, with such inimitable Energy, describes; *A Land of Darkness*, gloomy and horrible as the Shadow of Death; where all is Confusion, without any Order; and the very Light, or that which should illuminate the dismal Shades, is the Blackness of Darkness. *Job* x. 22.—Let me close my Note, with the candid but weighty Sentence, which closes *Xenophon's* History of *Cyrus*. Εἰ δὲ τις ταραχὴ μοι γινώσκει, τὰ ἐστὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπισκοπῶν, εὐρησὶ αὐτὰ μαρτυρεῖν αὐτοῖς μοις λόγους.

† *1 Cor.* ii. 14.

they are the purest Light, and the most perfect Wisdom, to Him they appear, not only dark and obscure, but even *Foolishness* itself.

Would this be the Case, if the Understanding was not greatly depraved? Should it be difficult for your Ear, to distinguish the Diversity of Sounds; or for your Eye, to discern the Variety of Colours; would You not conclude, that the Organs were very much impaired?

Ther. I think, You have treated the Understanding, as *Zopyrus* served his own Body *, when he went over to the Enemy.—Do You intend to mangle the other Faculties, at the same unmerciful Rate?

Assp. That Nobleman made the Wounds, which disfigured his Flesh. I have only probed the Sores, which were found in the Understanding. If I have touched the Quick, and put the Patient to Pain, it is only to facilitate the Operation of Medicine, and make way for a Cure.—But permit me to ask, Wherein does the Excellency of the human *Will* consist?

Ther. In following the Guidance of Reason, and submitting to the Influence of proper Authority.

Assp. The Will, I fear, rejects the Government of Reason; and it is undeniably certain, that it rebels against the Authority of GOD.

Cast your Eye upon that *Team of Horses*, with which yonder Countryman is ploughing his fallow Ground. No less than five of those robust Animals are linked together, and yield their submissive Necks to the Draught. They have more Strength than twenty Men, yet are managed by a *single Lad*. They not only stand in awe of the Lash, but listen to the Voice.

* See ROLLIN's *Ancient Hist.* Vol. III. p. 46.

Voice of their Driver. They turn to the Right-hand or to the Left; they quicken their Pace, or stop short in the Furrow; at the bare Intimation of his Pleasure.—Are *We* equally obedient to the Calls, to the Exhortations, the express Injunctions of our heavenly LORD? The blessed JESUS spoke at the Beginning, and the World was made. He speaks by his Providence, and the Universe is upheld. When He shall speak at the last Day, the Heavens will pass away, and the Earth be dissolved. Yet He speaks to Us in his divine Word, and We turn a deaf Ear to his Address. He speaks in tender Expostulations, and no Melting of Heart ensues. He speaks in precious Promises, and no ardent Desires are enkindled.—The Will, which, in these Cases, ought to be turned as *Wax* to the *Seal*, is unimpressed and inflexible as an *iron Sinew*.

Ther. The human Will is constantly inclined to preserve, accommodate, and make its Possessor happy. Is not this the right *Position*, in which it should always stand? Or the most desirable *Direction*, that can be given to its Motions?

Asp. I should be glad, if Fact bore witness to your Assertion. But Fact, I apprehend, is on the contrary Side.—I took notice, as we came along, of some *Ants* busily employed on a little Hillock. Have You made any Observations, *Theron*, on this reptile Community?

Ther. It is a little *Republic* *. They inhabit a Kind of oblong City, divided into various Streets. They are governed by Laws, and regulated by Politics, of their own. Their Magazines are commodiously formed, and judiciously guarded against the In-

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* See *Nat. Displ.* Vol. I.

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juries of the Weather. Some are defended by an Arch made of Earth, and cemented with a peculiar Sort of Glue. Some are covered with Rafter's of slender Wood, and thatched with Rushes or Grass. The Roof is always raised with a double Slope, to turn away the Current of the Waters, and shoot the Rain from their Store-houses. They all *bestir* themselves, with *incessant* Assiduity, while the Air is serene; while the Roads are good; and Abundance of loose Grain lies scattered over the Fields.—By these Precautions, they live secure, when Storms embroil the Sky; they want no Manner of Conveniency, even when Winter lays waste the Plains.

Asp. Do *We* improve, so diligently, our present Opportunities? This Life is the Seed-time of Eternity. Do *We* husband the precious Moments, like Persons sensible of their unspeakable Importance? Sensible, that if *We* trifle and are indolent, *they* will be irrecoverably gone, and *We* irretrievably ruined.

Sickness, *We* know not how soon, may invade Us, Pain may torment Us, and both may issue in our final Dissolution. Are *We* duly aware of these awful Changes, and properly solicitous to put all in order for their Approach?—*We* walk (alarming Thought!) upon the very Brink of Death, Resurrection, and Judgment. Do *We* walk like *wise Virgins*, with our Loins girt; with our Lamps trimmed; in a State of continual Readiness, for the heavenly BRIDEGROOM's Advent?

Those Ants *have no Guide, Overseer, or Ruler.* Yet *they prepare their Meat in the Summer, and gather their Food in the Harvest**. *We* have all these, yet neglect the Time of our Visitation. — *We* have
GOD's

GOD's unerring Word, to guide Us; GOD's ever-watchful Eye, to oversee Us; GOD's sovereign Command, to rule and quicken Us. Notwithstanding all these Motives, is not the Speech of the Sluggard, the very Language of our Conduct? *A little more Sleep, a little more Slumber, a little more Folding of the Hands to sleep* *. The most supine Indifference, where all possible Diligence is but just sufficient!—This, You must allow, is the true Character of Mankind in general. And does this demonstrate the *Rectitude* of their Will.

Ther. The Understanding may be said to carry the Torch, the Will to hold the Balance. Now, the Perfection of a Balance consists, in being so nicely poised, as to incline at the *least* Touch, and preponderate with the *slightest* Weight. This Property belongs, without all Dispute, to the human Will.

Asp. What? If one of your Scales should descend to the Ground, though charged with Trifles, that are light as Air? If the other should kick the Beam, though its Contents be weightier, than Talents of Gold?—Is not this an exact Representation of our Will,

* There is, if I mistake not, a nice Gradation, in this Speech of the Sluggard; such as very naturally *mimics* the Manner of that lazy Creature.—He pleads, first, for some considerable Degree of Indulgence, *A little Sleep*.—If that is too much to be granted, He craves some smaller Toleration of his Sloth; *A little Slumber*.—If the Taskmaster still rings in his Ear; still goads his Side; one almost sees the dull Wretch, rubbing his heavy Eyes, and yawning out his last Request; *A little Folding of the Hands at least to lie down*, *לשבת* Prov. vi. 10.—When such is our Conduct with regard to *eternal* Interests, how justly may We apply that spirited Expostulation of the Poet;

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Will, when the *fleeting* Pleasures of Sense, or the *puny* Interests of Time, excite our Wishes; even while the solid Delights of Religion, and the immensely rich Treasures of Immortality, can hardly obtain our Attention?—However, let Us quit the Metaphor, and examine Fact. Suppose, I make it appear, that, instead of choosing the most eligible Objects, the Will is so deplorably vitiated, as to *loathe* what is salutary, and be *fond* of what is baneful.

Ther. If You prove this to be universally the Case, You will prove your favourite Point with a witness.

Asp. When Providence is pleased to thwart our Measures, or defeat our Endeavours; to bring Us under the Cloud of Disgrace, or lay upon Us the Rod of Affliction? what is our Behaviour?—Do We bow our Heads in *humble* Resignation? Do We open our Mouths in *thankful* Acknowledgments?—Observe the Waters in that elegant octangular Basin. They assimilate themselves, with the utmost Readiness, and with equal Exactness, to the Vessel which contains them. So would the human Will, if it were not extremely froward and foolish, conform itself to the divine: which is unerringly wise, and, of all possible Contingencies, incomparably the best *.—Yet, how apt are We to fret with Dis-
quietude;

* This seems to be the Meaning of the Prophet, *צדק אשר לזרע* Isai. xxvi. 7. Not— *The Way of the Just is Uprightness* —A Sense, which the Construction of the Words will but difficultly admit; which, in the present Connection, is hardly consistent with Humility; and by no means proper, to introduce a devotional Address to the great JEHOVAH. Rather— *GOD, Way to the Just is Uprightness* ; or, still more emphatically, *Uprightnesses* . Is in all Respects irreprovable, excellent, admirable; suited, perfectly suited, to every sacred Attribute of Wisdom, Goodness, and Truth.

quietude; and struggle under afflictive Dispensations, *as a wild Bull in a Net!*

Ther. This is a very imperfect Proof, *Aspasio*, and corresponds with only Part of your Accusation. We may dislike what is wholesome, especially if it be unpalatable, yet not be fond of our Bane.

Asp. Should You see a Person, who thirsts after the putrid Lake, but disrelishes the clear running Fountain; who longs for the *impoisoned* Berries of the Nightshade, but abhors the *delicious* Fruit of the Orchard, would You applaud the Regularity of his Appetite?—I don't wait for your Answer. But I more than suspect, this is a true Picture of all unregenerate People. See! how they affect Dress and external Ornament; but are unwilling, rather than desirous, to be clothed with *Humility**, and to put on *CHRIST*†! Amusement will engage, Play animate, and Diversion fire them: but as to the Worship of the living GOD, O! *what a Weariness is it*†! Frothy Novels, and flatulent Wit, regale their Taste; while the Marrow and Fatness of the divine Word, are “as their sorrowful Meat.” Flatter them; and, though your Speech is a luscious Poison\$, their Eyes sparkle with Delight. Ad-

* 1 Pet. v. 5. † Rom. xiii. 14. † Mal. i. 13.

|| Job vi. 7. *Sicut Cibi Languorem, As the Meat of my Sickness.* For which We have no Appetite; in which We find no Relish, and which We frequently loath.

\$ Mr. Bannet, in one of his Evening Examinations, recollecting that He had heard Himself praised; and being conscious, that He heard it with Delight—taking Honour to Himself, and not giving GOD the Glory, Acts xii. 23.—Made this Memorandum in his Diary, “To-day, I have been bathing my Soul in Poison.”

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monish them; and though your Service is an excellent Oil *, Dissatisfaction lours on their Brow.—What is all this, but to lothe the Salutary, and long for † the Baneful?

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* Psal. cxli. 5.

† Would the Reader see this unhappy Contrast drawn in the strongest Colours, and by the most rhetorical Accumulation of Words? He may compare the royal Preacher, and the mourning Prophet.—*Because I have called, and Ye refused; I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof.* What a Croud of similar Ideas! Emphatically declaring the most incorrigible Perverseness; which is Proof against every Method of Reformation; against all the Arts even of divine Persuasion. *Prov. i. 24, 25.—The Host of Heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have fought, and whom they have worshipped.* What a Heap of synonymous Expressions! Significantly describing the most impetuous Ardour and Avidity, in the Ways of Sin; an Ardour, which no Prohibitions can restrain; and an Avidity, which never knows when to say, “It is enough.” *Jer. viii. 2.*

If I beg Leave to add another Example of this Kind, it is chiefly for the Sake of clearing up an obscure Passage in the *Psalms*; which seems to have been mistaken by the Authors of both our Versions.—*David*, to set forth the barbarous Affiduity of his Persecutors, says; *They wander up and down. They pry into every Corner; they search the City, and examine the Country; לאכל not for Meat;* (which, in this Connection, is a Sense quite foreign to the Subject, and very jejune indeed) *but to devour.* To devour me the destined Victim of their Rage. *And if they are not satisfied, if they cannot compass their Design by Day, ילל they will grudge?* No; but they will continue all Night, in the Prosecution of their Purpose. Neither Cold nor Darkness can retard them; neither Hardships nor Dangers can deter them; but their Attempts are as indefatigable, as their Malice is implacable. *Psal. lix. 15.*

Let me, from the same Comparison, propose one Question more; which may be applicable both to the Will and to the Understanding.—Should You hear of another Person, the State of whose Stomach was so disposed, that it turned the most nourishing Food into Phlegm; and derived Matter of *Disease*, from the most sovereign Supports of *Health*; what would You think of his Constitution?

Ther. I should certainly think it very much dis-tempered.

Assp. Without the Grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, our Souls turn every Occurrence into an Increase of their sinful Depravity*. Our very Table is a Snare; and instead of exciting Us to Gratitude, is a Provocative to Gluttony.—How difficult is it, when We flow in Plenty, not to be elated; when We are pressed with Poverty, not to repine!—Have We Business in the World? It cumbers our Thoughts, or tempts Us to Avarice. Have We no Business to manage? We sink into Sloth, and settle on the Lees of Voluptuousness.—If our Schemes are prosperous, it is odds but they attach Us to the Interests of Time. If they prove unsuccessful, We too often are chagrined with the Disappointment, and sin against Meekness.—Even the holy Commandment, instead of restraining Sin, or producing Obedience, irritates the inbred Depravity; and renders it more restless, more impetuous, more ungovernable†.—Those very Things, which should have been for our Welfare (so malignant and raging is our Corruption!) are converted into an *Occasion of falling*.

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— *Quodcunque infundis acescit.* HOR.

† Rom. vii. 8.

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Ther. The Will is under no *Necessity* of misemploying her Powers. She is *free* to act in this Manner or in that. And, if a Spendthrift, is not a Slave.

Assp. In Actions which relate to the *animal* Oeconomy, the Will is unquestionably free. She can contract the Forehead into a Frown, or expand it with a Smile.—In the *ordinary* Affairs of Life, She is under no Controul. We can undertake or decline a Journey, carry on or discontinue an Employ, just as We please.—In the *outward* Acts of Religion also, the Will is her own Mistress. We can read the Word of GOD, or go to the Place of divine Worship, without any extraordinary Aid from above.—But in Matters which are more intimately connected with our Salvation, the Case is widely different.

What says our famous old Poet *Spenser*? Amidst all his rich Fancy and bright Imagery, He speaks as plainly upon this Subject, as *Theron's* serious Friend.—

Ne let the Man ascribe it to his Skill,

That thorough Grace has got the Victory.

If any Strength We have, it is to Ill;

But all the Good is GOD's, the Power and eke the Will.

Ther. This wants Confirmation. More authentic Confirmation, than the fanciful Flights of a Poet.

Assp. Would You have a Person delight Himself in the LORD; take pleasure in Devotion; and set his Affections on Things above?—All this is both his Duty and his Interest. But alas! His In-

clinations gravitate the quite contrary Way. His Will is in the Condition of that distressed Woman, who was *bowed down with a Spirit of Infirmary, and could in no wise lift up Herself* *. Corruption, like a strong Bias influences, or rather like a heavy Mountain oppresses his Mind. Neither can He shake off the Propensity, or struggle away from the Load: until Grace, almighty Grace, interposes for his Release.—*Where the SPIRIT of the LORD is, there, and there alone, is Liberty* †; that sacred and glorious Liberty, which is not the common Privilege of all Men, but the high Prerogative of the Children of GOD.

Would You have a Person apply to the great REDEEMER; apply with a real Ardor of Desire; as *Bartimæus* of old, or the *Syrophœnician* Mother? Counting all Things but Dung, for the transcendent Excellency of *CHRIST*?—To do this, is to possess true Wisdom; and the only Expedient, to acquire true Happiness. But the human Will is like the withered Arm; cannot stretch forth itself to the all-gracious SAVIOUR: cannot hunger and thirst after his everlasting Righteousness and infinite Merit: cannot do this, till the SAVIOUR Himself speaks Power into the *enfeebled*, the *perverted* Faculty.—If You think otherwise; try the Experiment. Persuade Men to this necessary Practice. Urge the most weighty Arguments: devise the most pathetic Expostulations: let Zeal exert all her Force, and Rhetoric employ all her Art. Without being a Prophet, I dare venture to foretel the Issue. Disappointments, repeated Disappointments, will convince You—That our Di-

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* Luke xiii. 11.

† 2 Cor. iii. 17.

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vine MASTER knew what He said, when He solemnly dec'ared; *No Man can come to Me, except the FATHER, which hath sent Me, draw Him* *.

—That our Church has not taught Us to play the Hypocrite, when She teaches Us to confess; “We be tied and bound with the Chain of our Sins.”

Ther. Are We Slaves then? Will *Christianity* send Us to seek our Brethren, in the Mines or in the Gallies?

Asp. Christianity does not *send*, but *find* Us there. There, or in a worse Slavery †.—It is doubtless a most

* *John vi. 44.* It is not said, The FATHER drives, but draws: not by violent, irrational, compulsive Means; but by clear Conviction, sweet Persuasion, and Inducements suited to a reasonable Being. *Those* are the Cords of a Beast, *these* of a Man. So that We are not acted upon as Clock-work, or influenced as mere Machines, but made willing in the Day of his Power, *Psal. cx. 3.*—This Point is stated, with great Propriety, and equal Clearness, in our *tenth Article*. “The Condition of Man, after the Fall of Adam, is such, that He cannot turn and prepare Himself by his own natural Strength and good Works, to Faith and calling upon GOD. Wherefore, We have no Power to do good Works, pleasant and acceptable to GOD, without the Grace of GOD by CHRIST preventing Us, that We may have a good Will; and working with Us when We have that good Will.”

† St. Paul says of *Christians*, and reckons Himself in the Number, that naturally they *served* (not *diakoneis*, but *deuteis*, were absolute Slaves to) *divers Lusts and Pleasures*, Tit. iii. 3. The whole Verse is very remarkable, and nothing can be more apposite to *Aspasio's* Purpose. It shews Us, What *They* were by Nature, who through Grace became living Images of the blessed GOD.

This mortifying Doctrine is often acknowledged by our Church. Thus begins one of her public Supplications;

most abject State, to wear the Yoke, and truckle in Chains. Yet such, I apprehend, is the State of our Minds by Nature. To prove this, We need not go down to the lowest Ranks of Life. *These*, You might say with the Prophet, *are poor; these are foolish; they have not known the Way of the LORD, nor the Judgment of their GOD.—I will get me therefore to the great Men **, and examine their Disposition.

Have You not known Persons of the greatest Intrepidity, and firmest Resolution, hurried away by their Lusts, as “a rolling Thing before the Whirl-
“wind †?” Perhaps, they were bold enough to face Danger, and defy the Sword, in the Field of Battle. Yet, were no more able to renounce the wanton Allurements of Beauty, or the soft Solicitations of Pleasure; than the *Moth* can forbear fluttering about the Flame, even though it singes her Wings, and is scorching her to death.—Others, possessed of a refined Imagination, disdain the gross Indulgencies of Sensuality; yet are Slaves to their own *domineering* Passions. They are blown into the most intemperate Rage, and pushed on to the most extravagant Actions, by every little ruffling Accident. They see the *Meanness*, which such an ungovernable Spirit argues: they feel the *Misery*, which

tions; *Almighty GOD, who alone canst order the unruly Wills and Affections of sinful Man.* It seems, We cannot determine our own Wills, nor regulate our own Affections. What is this but Bondage?—What does this betoken? What does this imply?

————— *But lapsed Powers enthrall'd
By Sin to foul exorbitant Desires?*

MILTON, Book III.

* Jer. v. 4, 5.

† Isai. xvii. 13.

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which such internal Tempests create: nay, they resolve to suppress the Impetuosity of their Temper. Yet, like a Feather bore away by the Torrent, they yield to the very first Provocation, and are as furiously resentful as ever.—Will You call *these* Persons free, because their Task-masters and their Tyrants are lodged within *? Because the Fetters are forged, not for the meaner, but for the immortal Part of their Nature?

Ther. Let Us pass to the *Affections*. These are to the Soul, what Wings are to the Eagle, or Sails to the Ship. These always stand ready, to catch the Gales of Interest, and to spring at the Signal of Reason.

Asp. O! that they did!—But, if the Wings are clogged with Mire; if the Sails are disproportioned to the Ballast; what Advantage will accrue, either to the Animal, or to the Vessel?—The One will, probably, be overfet in the Voyage; the Other must lie groveling on the Ground.

Ther. *Desire* seems to be the first, which “opens the Mouth, or moves the Wing, or peeps †.” Desire is active as a Flame, and ever in Pursuit of Happiness.

Asp. What if your Flame, instead of shooting upwards, should point its *inverted* Spires to the Earth? Would not this be strange, and a Sign of great Disorder?—GOD is the Center of Perfection, and the Source of Felicity. All that is amiable in itself, is comprehended in GOD. All that is beneficial to

R 3 Us,

————— *Intus & in fecore agro*
Nascuntur Domini.

PERS.

† Isai. x. 14.

Us, proceeds from GOD. Do our Desires uniformly *tend* to this super-excellent Being? Do our Wishes *terminate* in the Enjoyment of his ever-glorious Majesty? Alas! We are naturally estranged from Him: We covet no Communion with Him. We are wedded to Trifles, and dote upon Vanity. But *to GOD we say*—it is evidently the Language of our Conduct—*Depart from Us; We desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways* *.

If Desire is the First-born among the Affections, observe it in Children. There it appears in its Dawn, and has most of pure Nature.—See, how those *Flies*, exulting in the sunny Gleam, vibrate with all the Rapidity of Motion their little Wings †. So prompt and expedite ‡, are the Desires of Children, to any corrupting Diversion.—See, how sluggishly that *Snail*, crawling forth amidst the refreshing Moisture, drags her slow Length along. So dull ||, if not reluctant, are the Dispositions of our Children, to any improving Exercise. Rewards will hardly win them to the latter; the Rod can hardly deter them from the former.—And None, None but GOD, “by his *special* Grace preventing them, can put “into their Minds good Desires §.”

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* Job xxi. 14.

† The Wings of a Fly are supposed to have the *quickest* Motion, of any material Substance which lives. And if they make, as Naturalists imagine, some Hundreds of Vibrations in a Second of Time, I think, there can be no Competition in the Case.

‡ This is what the *Greeks* call *εὐδυσπία*. Which, with a Propriety not to be equalled by any Translation, expresses both the *Promptitude* of the Agent, and the *Immediacy* of the Action. *Acts* xiii. 10.

|| *Ναὐβου γελόζα*. Heb. v. 11.

§ *Collect* for Easter-Day.

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DIALOGUE XIII. 263

Is our *Love* under better Regulation?—How easily are We captivated with a fair Complexion and graceful Form; especially, when set off with the Decorations of Dress. But how little affected with the Beauty of internal Character; with the Ornaments of Virtue, and the Graces of *Christianity*? Can it be supposed, that the Pulse of the Soul beats regularly; where there is such a *passionate Fondness* for fading Embellishments, and such a *cold Indifference* for the most substantial Endowments?—How easily are We smitten with Riches * and Splendour! How our Hearts dance under a Sense of Distinction, Superiority, or Preferment! Yet how backward to love that infinitely loving and lovely REDEEMER, who would die Himself, rather than We should become a Prey to Death! Tinder We are, perfect Tinder to the Sparks of irrational and dissolute Affection. Harder than Adamant, colder than Ice, to this heavenly Flame.

Ther. If our Love is blind, our *Fear* has not lost her Eyes. Fear is quick of Apprehension: and, instead of being stupidly insensible, is ready to “rise up at the Voice of a Bird †.”

Asp. The Passion of Fear is sufficiently active, but deplorably *misapplied*.—We fear the Reproach of Men. But are We alarmed at the View of that *everlasting Shame*, which the LORD, the righteous Judge, shall pour upon the Ungodly? We shudder at the drawn Dagger, and stand appalled at the

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* On this Account, because We are naturally Lovers of Riches, of Pleasure, and of the World, more than of GOD our SAVIOUR, the Scripture arraigns Us as *Adulterers and Adulteresses*. James iv. 4.

† Eccles. xii. 4.

headlong Precipice. But how often have We defied the Sword of almighty Vengeance, and sported upon the Brink of irretrievable Perdition?

Sin is the most pernicious of all Evils. Sin violates the divine Command, and provokes the Divine MAJESTY. Sin offers Despise to the Blessed SPIRIT, and tramples upon the Blood of JESUS. For Sin, the Transgressor is banished from the blissful Presence of GOD, and doomed to dwell with inextinguishable Burnings. Do We dread this grand Destroyer of our Happiness? Dread it more than any Calamities, more than all Plagues?—Take one of those fine May-dukes, which glow with such an inviting Scarlet, on yonder Espalier. Offer it to the Blackbird, that serenades us from the neighbouring Elm. The Creature, though fond of the Dainty, will fly from your Hand, as hastily as from a leveled Fowling-piece. He suspects a Design upon his Liberty; and therefore will endure any Extremity, will even starve to death, rather than taste the most tempting Delicacy in such hazardous Circumstances.—Are We equally fearful of an infinitely greater Danger? Do We fly, with equal Solitude *, from the delusive but destructive Wiles of Sin? Alas! Do not We too often swallow the Bait, even when We plainly discover the fatal Hook? Do We not snatch the forbidden Fruit, though Conscience remonstrates; though GOD prohibits; though Death eternal threatens!

Ther.

* The *insigating* Admonition, transmitted to *Brentius* by an anonymous Letter, when the Papists had formed a Plot against his Life, should be the Rule of our Conduct on such an Occasion; *Fuge! Fuge! cito—citius—citissime.*

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Ther. Conscience then, according to your own Account, has escaped the general Shipwreck. Conscience is GOD's Vicegerent in the Soul, and executes her Office faithfully. Even the Gentiles *shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another* *.

Assp. If there be any Remains of the divine Image, perhaps, they are to be found in the Conscience. But even this is not exempt from the common Ruin.—Consider its *Light*. It is like a dim Taper, feebly glimmering; and just serving to make the Darkneſs viſible. Or, if it discovers, it discovers only an obſcure Something, We know not what. Which, inſtead of informing, tantalizes Us; and inſtead of guiding, bewilders Us. As falſe and deluſory Lights on the Shore, put a Cheat upon the Mariner; and, inſtead of directing Him to Safety, miſlead Him into Danger †.—Consider its *Operations*. It is either dumb or dead, or both. *Dumb*; or elſe how vehemently would it upbraid Us, for our ſhocking Ingratitude to our Supreme Omnipotent BENE-FACTOR?

* *Rom. ii. 15.* Methinks, I would not tranſlate the Word *μελας* the mean while, but alternately or interchangeably accusing or excuſing; ſometimes one, ſometimes the other; in Conformity to the different Circumſtances of their Temper and Behaviour.

† This ſeems to have been the Caſe with the *Heathen* World.—Conſcience arraigned, and found them guilty. This put them upon practiſing their *abominable*, ſometimes their *inhuman* Idolatries.—Nay, this induced them to invent and propagate the moſt impious Miſrepreſentations of the DEITY. That they might *ſheat* the Sting of Conſcience, and find ſome *Salvo* for their own Iniquities, they made even the Objects of their Worſhip, the *Patrons* and the *Precedents* of their favourite Vices.

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FACTOR? How loudly would it inveigh against our stupid Neglect of spiritual Interests, and eternal Ages? *Dead*; otherwise how keenly would it smart, when gashed with Wounds—*numerous*, as our repeated Violations of the divine Law—*deep*, as the horrid Aggravations of our various Iniquities.

Ther. Do You call this an Answer to my Objection, *Aspasio*? If it be an Answer, it resembles, in Point of satisfactory Evidence, the Light which You ascribe unto the Conscience.

Asp. The *Gentiles*, We own, shew the *Work*, but not the *Love* of the Law, written on their Hearts. Some leading Notices of Right and Wrong they have: some speculative Strictures of Good and Evil. But without a *real Abhorrence* of the One, or a *cordial Delight* in the Other. Which, far from ennobling their Nature, far from vindicating their Practice, argues the exceeding Depravity of the former, and renders the latter absolutely without Excuse.

No; You say, Conscience *excuses* the Heathens. Rather, their Conscience *bears witness* to the Equity of the Law; while their Thoughts *make some weak Apology**, for the Tenour of their Conduct. This is far from acquitting, far from justifying them.—Besides, these weak Attempts to excuse, are always founded on *Ignorance*. Did they know themselves, their Duty, or their GOD, Conscience would, without the least Hesitation, bring in her Verdict,
Guilty.

* The Word is *απολογεσθαι*, signifying the *Attempt* of an accused Person to vindicate Himself; not *επιμαρτυρεσθαι*, the *Deposition* of a Witness, attesting his Innocence; much less *δικαιωσασθαι*, the *Sentence* of a Judge, pronouncing Him upright.

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Guilty.—The Apostle assures Us, that, till Faith, which is a divine Principle, takes place in our Breasts, *both the Mind and Conscience are defiled* *. Here, and elsewhere, plainly intimating; that the Conscience is evil, and ever will be evil, till it is *sprinkled with the Blood of CHRIST* †.

It *accuses* some, and it ought to accuse, yea, to condemn All †. But even Here it evidences itself to be corrupt. For, its Accusations are sometimes *erroneous* ||, and no better than false Witness; sometimes *partial* §, and suborned by Appetite; and very,

* Tit. i. 15.

† Heb. x. 22.

‡ The Apostle, I think, intimates as much, in the very peculiar Turn of his Expression, *η και απολογουμενων*, *accusing or even apologizing*. As though the latter was a *strange Act*; quite unexpected, and utterly unreasonable, in Creatures altogether become abominable.

|| *Erroneous*—What else was that grand Article in the Accusations of Conscience, mentioned, with such particular Distinction, by *Virgil*;

———*Phlegyasque miserrimus omnes*

Admonet, & magnâ testatur Voce per Umbras,

Discite Justitiam moniti, & non temnere Divos.

For Men to *despise* such dunghil, worse than dunghil Deities, had been their *Virtue* if done, and was their *Duty* to do.—What else was that Voice of Conscience, mentioned by our LORD, *John* xvi. 2. or that, confessed by the Apostle, *Acts* xxvi. 9.

§ *Partial*—Otherwise, how could the most celebrated among the antient Heroes applaud and practise, that execrable Crime, *Self-murder*?—How could their first-rate Historians extol and almost consecrate, that diabolical Principle of Action, *Pride*?—How could their ablest Teachers of Morality, not only tolerate, but establish the Error, by neglecting to find so much as a Name for that amiable Virtue, *Humility*? Or, which is still worse, by using the Word to signify a *disingenuous sordid Practice*,
and

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very, very often *ineffectual*.—Nay, when they do take Effect, they produce no Fruit that is truly good. They work not a genuine Humiliation, or an unfeigned Repentance; but either a slavish Dread of GOD, as a severe Judge; or Hatred of Him, as an inexorable Enemy.

Ther. *Hatred of GOD*—Astonishing Impiety! Is it possible for the human Heart to admit such enormous, almost incredible Wickedness?

Asp. You may well be astonished, *Theron*; and GOD may justly demand; *What Iniquity have my People found in me, that they are gone far from me* *?

“ I created them out of Nothing, and endowed
“ them with an immortal Soul. As a Father, I
“ have provided for them. As a Nurse, I have
“ cherished them.—I have given them the Earth,
“ and the Fulness thereof, for their present Accom-
“ modation. I have prepared Heaven, and its un-
“ speakable Happiness, for their future Enjoyment.
“ All my Creatures do them Service, and even
“ my Angels minister unto their Good.—Do they
“ desire greater Demonstrations of my Love? I
“ have given, what was dearer to me than all
“ Angels, than all Worlds. I have given my
“ SON from my Bosom, to die in their Stead.—
“ Would they have farther Evidences of my dis-
“ tinguished Regard? Behold! I touch the Moun-
“ tains, and they smoke: I look upon the Earth,
“ and it trembles: I cast even the Princes of Hea-
“ ven, when they break my Law, into Chains of

“ Dark-
and an *abject* *daftardly* Spirit. *Que omnia, partim infamia, partim humilia, atque ab Honestate remota.* Corn. Nep. in Præf. *Ὅτις, ὡς ταπεινότητι καὶ ἐλαφροτάτοι ἐστίν.* Xenoph. De Inst. Cyr. Lib. vii.

* Jer. ii. 5.

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“Darkness. But to disobedient and rebellious
 “Men, I condescend to act as a Supplicant.
 “Though highly injured, and horribly affronted,
 “I beseech them—again and again I beseech them—
 “saying, BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD.”

To hate * *such* a GOD, is indeed the most detestable Impiety, almost incredible Wickedness. Yet Man, foolish Man, practises this Impiety, whenever, for the Sake of a vile Lust, an ignoble Pleasure, or an unruly Passion, He transgresses the Command of his CREATOR.

Shall I exemplify the Doctrine, in another of the Affections?

Ther. In Truth, *Aspasio*, I begin to be sick of the Subject. If human Nature is so ulcerated, the less You touch it the better.—However, let us not quite omit the *irascible* Appetite.

Ass. Of this We have already taken a Side-view; if You choose to see it in fuller Proportion, make your Observation on *Fervidus*.—*Fervidus* comes home in a Rage. See his fierce indignant Eye! Mark his wild irregular Gait! Now, his Cheek kindles into Flame; in a Moment, it is pale as the Corpse. His Lips quiver, and Words are half choaked in their Utterance. Yet, though He can hardly speak, He vows Revenge, and utters Imprecations,—What, I beseech You, is the Cause of all this wondrous Ferment? Why truly, a Neighbour

* Hatred of GOD is so *shocking* an Expression, that one would almost wish, never to hear or read it. But it occurs in our unerring Book; is too often exemplified in common Life; and is engraven by corrupt Nature on every human Heart. See *Rom.* i. 30. *Exod.* xx. 5. *John* xv. 25. *Rom.* viii. 7.

bour has dropt some reflecting Hint, or a Servant has blundered in some trifling Message. Such Usage, *Fervidus* says, is intolerable; and such Negligence unpardonable.—This same *Fervidus* has offered numberless Affronts to his MAKER; He has most scandalously neglected the Will of his Almighty LORD; yet feels no Indignation against *Himself*.—He is all Fury, when his own Credit is touched. But when the Interest of *CHRIST* is wounded, He can sit unconcerned, or pass it off with a Laugh.—Anger, I acknowledge, is sometimes becoming and useful. But is *this* its right Temperature? *This* its proper Application?

Ther. This is the Practice only of some few turbulent and boisterous Spirits. To saddle *their* Qualities upon *every* Person, is a Procedure just as equitable, as the Madman's * Calculation was reasonable; who took an Account of every Ship, which entered the Harbour, and set it down for his own.

Asp. The latter Part of my Charge, I fear, is applicable to more than a few.—However, let Us consider the most *calm* and *sedate* Minds. How are they affected under Injuries? Do they never aggravate Failings into Crimes? Do they find it easy to abstain from every Emotion of Ill-will? Easy to love their Enemies, and do Good to Those who hate them? These godlike Tempers, if our Nature was not degenerated, would be the *spontaneous* Produce of the Soul. But now, alas! they are not raised, without much Difficulty; seldom come to any considerable Degree of Eminence; never arrive at a State of true Perfection. An undoubted Proof, that they are *Exotics*, not *Natives* of the Soil.

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* *Thrasylus*, an *Athenian*.

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Now We are speaking of Plants, cast your Eye upon the Kitchen-garden. Many of those Herbs, will perfume the *hard* Hand, which crushes them; and embalm the *rude* Foot, which tramples on them. Such was the benign Conduct of our LORD. He always overcame Evil with Good. When his Disciples disregarded Him, in his bitter Agony, He made the *kindest* Excuse for their ungrateful Stupidity *. When his Enemies, with unparalleled Barbarity, spilt his very Blood; He *pleaded* their Ignorance, as an Extenuation of their Guilt †.—Is the same Spirit in Us, which was also in our Divine MASTER? Then are our Passions rightly poised, and duly tempered. But if Resentment kindles, and Animosity rankles in our Hearts; this is an infallible Sign, that We swerve from our SAVIOUR's Pattern; consequently, are fallen from our primitive Rectitude.

Ther. What say You of the *Fancy*? This sure, if no other Faculty, retains the primitive Rectitude. What Pictures does she form, and what Excursions does she make? She can dive to the Bottom of the Ocean; can soar to the Height of the Stars; and walk upon the Boundaries of Creation.

Asp. That the *Fancy* is lively and excursive, I readily grant. It can out-travel the Post, or out-fly the Eagle. But if it travel, only to pick *Shells*; or fly abroad, to bring home *Mischief*; then, I apprehend, though You should admire the Faculty, You will hardly be in Raptures with its Agency.—This is the real Truth. Our *Fancy*, till divine Grace regulate and exalt its Operations, is generally employed in picking painted Shells, or culling venomous Herbs.

* Matt. xxvi. 41.

† Luke xxiii. 34.

Herbs. *Weaving* (as the Prophet very elegant, and no less exactly describes the Case) *the Spider's Web, or hatching Cockatrice Eggs* *. Bused in the most absurd Impertinencies; or acting in Speculation, the vilest Iniquities. That, which should be a *Garden inclosed, a Fountain sealed* †, for the PRINCE of Peace, is the Thoroughfare of Vanity.—And even when We are renewed from above, O! how necessary is it, to keep an incessant Watch, and exercise a strict Discipline, over this volatile, variable, treacherous *Vagrant*!

The *Memory*, as well as the *Fancy*, is impaired; or, if not impaired, is debauched. Why else does it so firmly *retain* the Impressions of an Injury, but so easily *let slip* the Remembrance of a Benefit? Any idle Fopperies, which sooth our Vanity, and increase our Corruption, cleave to the Thoughts, as the vexatious Burr to our Clothes. While the noble Truths of the Gospel, and the rich Mercies of a gracious GOD, slide away from the Mind (as Water from the Feathers of a Swan) and leave no lasting Trace behind them. This double Perverseness is very emphatically, and too truly represented by *Jeremiah*; *Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire? Yet my People have forgotten me, Days without number* †.—If We hear a loose Hint, or read an immodest Expression, they are almost sure to fasten themselves on our Memory. If shaken off, they follow Us with a troublesome Importunity. If excluded, as unwelcome Visitants, they force themselves, again and again, upon our Imagination. They dog Us to the Closet; they haunt our most retired Hours; and too often disturb our very De-

votions.

* *Isai. lix. 5.*

† *Cant. iv. 12.*

‡ *Jer. ii. 32.*

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votions.—Tell me now, can that Faculty be upright and uncorrupted, which is a *perforated Sieve*, to transmit the Beneficial; but a *thirsty Sponge*, to imbibe the Pernicious *.

Ther. Well, my Friend, whatever Guilt I or Others have contracted, *Flattery*, I dare be positive, is none of yours. Human Nature has received no heightening or adulatory Touches from your Pencil. You have pourtrayed Her *foolish* and *beastly*, and every Thing bad but *devilish*.

Ass. And this, even this Abomination, I must not secrete, I dare not except.—*Envy* is a devilish Disposition. It subsists no where, but in damned Spirits, and fallen Souls. Yet, infernal as it is, it has been found in Persons of the most exalted Character. The magnanimous *Joshua* felt its cancrous Tooth †. The Disciples of the blessed *JESUS* were soured with its malignant Leaven ‡. An Apostle declares, that *the Spirit which dwelleth in Us lusteth to Envy* ||; is impetuously prone to that detestable Temper.

Lying is confessedly a diabolical Practice. Yet, how unaccountably forward are our Children, to utter Falshood? As soon as they are born, they go

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astray;

* This Remark suggests a solid Confutation of that specious Argument, frequently used in Behalf of some fashionable but *disolute* Diversions. “They are interspersed, say their Admirers, with Sentiments of Virtue, and Maxims of Morality.”—Should We admit the Truth of this Plea; yet the depraved Disposition of Mankind, is pretty sure to drop the Morality, and carry away the Ribaldry.

————— *Dociles imitandis*

Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus.

† Numb. xi. 29. ‡ Matt. xx. 24. || James iv. 5.

astray; and as soon as they speak, they speak Lies.—I said *unaccountably*. But I recal the Expression. The Cause is evident. They have lost the Image of the GOD of Truth; and are become like that apostate Spirit, who is a *Liar, and the Father of it* *.

What think You of *Malice, of Hate, and Revenge*? Are they not each a Species of Murder, and the Seed of the old Serpent? Unless, therefore, We are entirely free from all these hellish Emotions, We must, *We must* acknowledge, that the Prince of this World † has his Party within Us. May the Almighty Hand of our GOD extirpate and subdue it, Day by Day!

You tell me, I am *no Flatterer*.—Should a Person, who professes Himself the Friend of his Fellow-creatures, soothe them into a *false Peace*? Should He bolster them up in a *groundless Conceit* of their Excellency, when they really are no better than “an unclean Thing?”—Shall the Surgeon assure his Patient, “All is well;” even when the Mortification has taken place, and the Gangrene is spreading? This were to refine the first out of all Benevolence, and to flatter the last into his Grave.

A Disputant of less Complaisance than my *Theron*, would probably ask, with a contemptuous Sneer; “Have You then been drawing your own Picture?”—To Whom I would reply, with Confusion and Sorrow, “I have.” Alledging this only, to moderate my *Confusion*; That I am daily seeking, by Prayer and Watchfulness, more and more to put off this old *Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts* †. And, to alleviate my *Sorrow*, I am endeavouring continually to remember; That, however unworthy

* John viii. 44. † John xiv. 30. ‡ Eph. iv. 22.

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I am, however vile I may have been, my adored REDEEMER's Righteousness is perfect; and in *this* Righteousness every Believer is to make his Boast.

Ther. So then Man is blind in his Understanding; perverse in his Will; disorderly in his Affections; influenced by Dispositions, which are partly brutal, and partly diabolical.—I have often heard You extol, in Terms of high Admiration, the Virtue of *Humility*. You have lavished all the Riches of Eloquence, when haranguing on Poverty of Spirit. If *such* be the Condition of Mankind, they have infinite Cause to be poor in Spirit. They must, therefore, have *one* Excellency left; and according to your own Account, a very distinguishing one.

Assp. Scarce any Thing displays, in a more glaring Light, the extreme Depravity of Man, than his strong Propensity to *Pride*; notwithstanding so much Vileness, and so many Deformities.—Should the noisome Leper admire the *Beauty* of his Complexion, or the impotent Paralytic glory in the *Strength* of his Sinews; would they not be mistaken, even to a Degree of Sottishness and Frenzy? Yet, for Man, fallen Man, who has lost his original Righteousness, which was the true Ornament of his Nature; who is become subject to base and sordid Lusts, or, as the Apostle speaks, *is earthly and sensual*—for *Him* to be proud, is still more absurdly wicked. And since this is the Case, I cannot acquit Him from the last and heaviest Article of the sacred Writer's Charge; I have a fresh and more convincing Proof, that We do Him no Wrong, when We call his Nature, his Disposition, his *Wisdom*—*devilish* *.

S 2

Ther.

* James iii. 15.

Ther. Why do You reckon Pride an universally prevailing Corruption? I see no Ground for such a dishonourable Suspicion. I hope, I *myself* am an Instance of the contrary. To unguarded Sallies of Passion, to several other Faults, I confess myself subject. But cannot think, that I am proud.

Asp. Ah! *Theron*, if You was not proud, You would not be passionate. Unreasonable Anger always proceeds from an over-weening Opinion of our own Worth.—One who, besides his acquired Knowledge of human Nature, had the supernatural Gift of discerning Spirits, is observed to join *Humility* and *Meekness* *. Intimating, that they are amiable Twins; and where the former exists, the latter cannot be absent.—Always consistent with Himself, He links together the opposite Vices, *heady and high-minded* †: not obscurely hinting, that those who are easily provoked, are certainly proud.—Shall I add, without Offence? If we fancy our Minds to be clear from the Weeds of Vanity, and our Thoughts free from the Workings of Self-admiration; it is a most pregnant Symptom, that We are *over-run* with the first; are *abandoned* to the last; and *blinded* by both.

Pride was the first Sin, that found Entrance into our Nature; and it is, perhaps, the last that will be expelled.—What are all our Afflictions, but a Remedy provided for this inveterate Disease? Intended to *hide Pride* ‡ *from Man*. What is the Institution

* *Eph.* iv. 2. The same Connection is made by our LORD; *Learn of ME, for I am meek and lowly.*

† 2 *Tim.* iii. 4. In the same Strain speaks *Isaiah*; *His Pride and his Wrath.* Chap. xvi. 6.

‡ *Job* xxxiii. 17.

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of the Gospel, but a Battery erected against this Strong-hold of Satan? Ordained to *cast down every high Imagination* *.—Though that Remedy is often applied, though this Battery is continually playing; yet the peccant Humour is not entirely purged off, nor the Elatement of Spirit totally subdued, till *Mortality is swallowed up of Life.*

Pride is the Sin, which most easily besets Us. *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean* † from this Iniquity? It defiles our Duties, and intermingles itself with our very Virtues. It starts up, I know not how, in our most solemn Hours, and our most sacred Employments.—The good *Hezekiah*, whose Prayers were more powerful than all the Forces of *Sennacherib*, was not Proof against the Wiles of this subtle Sorcerers ‡. Even the holy Apostle, who had been caught up into the third Heavens, was in Danger of being *puffed up* with Pride. In such great Danger, that it was necessary to put a Lancet into the gathering Tumour; or, as He Himself expresses it, to fix a *Thorn in his Flesh* ||, and permit the *Messenger of Satan* to buffet Him.

How

* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. † Prov. xx. 9. ‡ 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

|| 2 Cor. xii. 7. This Thorn has given as much Perplexity to the Commentators, as it gave Pain to the Apostle. Some have found paralytic Symptoms in the Passage, with ridiculous Distortions of the Countenance. Some have felt a violent Head-ach, or a grievous nephritic Disease. Others have been pestered with, or rather dreamt of, I know not what importunate Lusts.

To me the Sense is perfectly clear, and seems fully explained by the Apostle Himself.—The Thorn was *in the Flesh*; a Tribulation that affected, not his spiritual, but his bodily State.—It was inflicted by a *Messenger of Satan*;

How pathetically is this Corruption lamented, and how truly described, by “ a sweet Singer of “ our *Israel!*”

But Pride, that busy Sin,

Spoils all that I perform.

Curs'd Pride! that creeps securely in,

And swells a haughty Worm.

Thy Glories I abate,

Or praise Thee with Design;

Part of thy Favours I forget,

Or think the Merit mine.

The

tan; by persecuting Zealots, who were the Emiffaries and Agents of Hell; whom *Satan* instigated to harrass and torment this eminent Minister of *CHRIST*.—In what it consisted, the tenth Verse declares; in *Reproaches, Necessities, Persecutions, Distresses*. These were the *Infirmities*, these the Calamities, which, at the first Onset, startled and shocked the unexperienced Soldier: from which He *thrice*, or repeatedly, prayed to be delivered: but with which the Wisdom of *GOD* saw it proper, to have Him almost continually exercised. These are what He means by (*καταφιλη*) the ignominious and painful *Buffetings*. In short; these both pointed the Thorn, and planted it in his Flesh.

The *illative* Particles *εν*, *διο*, and the comparative Adverb *μᾶλλον*, I think, not only *countenance*, but *require* this Interpretation. *q. d.* “ *Therefore*, since the divine Grace “ will be sufficient for me; enable me to improve from, “ and triumph over, the sharpest Trials: since, in accomplishing this, the Strength and Power of *CHRIST* “ will be illustriously displayed: I will, henceforward, “ rather welcome than dread, rather acquiesce in than “ deprecate, the afflictive Circumstances.—Since this “ Thorn is made to bear Fruit so advantageous to myself, and so honourable to my *SAVIOUR*, it shall “ no longer be the Subject of my Complaint, but of my “ Complacency (*ευδοκω*;) and the Cause, not of my *Regret*, but of my *Glorying* (*καυχησομαι*.)”

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*The very Songs I frame,
Are faithless to thy Cause;
And steal the Honours of thy Name,
To build their own Applause *.*

Ther. Now, I presume, You have given the last Touches to your distorted Pourtrait.

Asp. There are other disagreeable and shocking Features. But those I shall cast into Shades, or hide under a Veil. One Particular You must allow me to add; which, like a sullen Air in the Countenance, throws aggravated Horror over the Whole. I mean, An Inclination to be *fond of our Slavery*.—Do You remember the Story of *Demaratus*, the *Lacedemonian* Prince?

Ther. Being deposed by his Countrymen, and banished from *Sparta*, He was constrained to seek Protection in the *Persian* Court. For a while He might seem reconciled to his Vassalage, and suppress the *Spartan* in his Breast. But when He beheld *Leonidas* and his gallant Troops preparing to defend the Pass of *Thermopylæ*, He could disguise Himself no longer. The Tears trickled down his Cheeks. He bitterly lamented his dishonourable Situation. He extolled the *Grecians* to *Xerxes's* Face; and longed to join those brave Patrons of Liberty. But was detained, still detained, by his hard Circumstances, among the vile Stipendaries of Tyranny †.

Asp. Yes; in this Instance, and in others, *the captive Exile basteeth to be loosed* ‡. But We alas!

S 4

We

* *WATTS's Hor. Lyr.*

† The generous Spirit, but calamitous Fate, of this royal Exile, are finely described in *Mr. GLOVER's Leonidas*, Book III.

Isai. li. 1

We prefer Bondage to Freedom, and are loth to leave our Prison.—Of this, our Backwardness to *Self-examination* *, is both a Consequence and a Proof.—Self-examination, under the Agency of the blessed SPIRIT, would open a Window in our Dungeon; would shew Us our wretched Condition, and teach Us to sigh for Deliverance.—Why have We such a Dislike of *Reproof*? Because We hug our Chains, and choose Darknes rather than Light. Reproof is more grating than the harshest Discord; though it tends to dissolve the Enchantment, and rescue Us from the Tyranny of Sin. While *Flattery*, which abets the Delusion, and strengthens the Spell, is Music to our Ears.—Is not our *Reason*, which should arraign and condemn every Irregularity, forward to invent Excuses, and to spare the favourite Folly? Reason, which should unsheath the *Dagger*, superinduces the *Mask*; and, instead of striking at the Heart of our Vices, screens them under the Cover of some plausible Names. A wicked Habit is called a human Infirmary; insnaring Diversions pass for innocent Amusements; a revengeful Disposition is termed Spirit, Gallantry, and Honour. Thus our Reason (if, when so egregiously perverted, it deserves the Name) is ingenious to obstruct our Recovery; and rivets on the Shackles, which our Passions have formed †.

This

— *Nemo in sese descendere, Nemo Cogitat.*

P E R S.

† Perhaps, this is what our LORD means, when, developing the human Heart, and discovering its latent Enormities, He closes the dark Account with *acquiescence*: implying that *Stupidity*, which has no Sense of

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This the eternal WISDOM foresaw, and therefore uttered that tender Expostulation; *How long Ye simple Ones will Ye love Simplicity, and Scorners delight in their Scorning, and Fools hate Knowledge? Even the inestimably precious Knowledge of an all-atoning and completely justifying SAVIOUR; who preaches, who has purchased, and who works Deliverance—preaches in his Word, has purchased by his Blood, and works by his SPIRIT, Deliverance for the Captives—the wretched Captives of Ignorance, Sin, and Death *.*

This I take to be the most *flagrant* and *deplorable* Effect of human Depravity—our Aversion to the Doctrine, the Privileges, the Grace of the Gospel. Beware, my dear Friend, lest You prove my Point by—shall I speak it? Would You suspect it?—your own Practic. Zealous as I am for my Tenets, I should be sorry, extremely sorry, to have *such* a Demonstration of their Truth.

Ther. You are highly obliging, *Aspasio*, to single me out for your Evidence. Yet why should the Honour be appropriated to myself? It belongs, upon the Foot of the preceding Calculation, not to your Friend only, but to the whole Species.—If You was aiming at None but the Licentious and Abandoned, You would have None to oppose You, but Persons of that Character. Your Arrows of Satire, would then be rightly leveled, and might be serviceable to Mankind. Whereas, to put *All* in the black List; to mark *All* with the Villain's Brand; this can never

of its Misery; that *Perverseness*, which has no Desire of a Recovery. Both which render all the other Evils far more inveterate. *Mark vii. 22.*

* Luke iv. 18.

ver be *Christian* Charity; this is unsufferable Censoriousness.

Asp. Let me beseech You, *Theron*, not to misapprehend my Design. I speak not as a malevolent Satirist, but would imitate the faithful Physician. I am opening the Sore, that it may admit the healing Balm: and should I perform the Operation with an *envenomed* Instrument? My Soul abhors the Thought.—I must entreat You likewise to remember the Distinction, between a State of Nature, and a State of Grace. We are all naturally evil. *The World*, says the Apostle—lest We should imagine, that the Charge is advanced only against some abandoned Wretches, He enlarges the Indictment; He renders it universal—*the whole World*; not barely slips by Inadvertence into a single Sin, or falls through Infirmary into frequent Miscarriages, but *lieth in Wickedness* *. As the Ax-head, mentioned by the sacred Historian, lay all torpid and sluggish at the Bottom of *Jordan* †. In this miserable Condition We should remain; yes, ever remain, did not a *supernatural* Power work in Us both *to will and to do*; somewhat like that Power which caused the ponderous Iron to rise in the Water, and swim on the Surface.

It is this supernatural Power, which makes some to differ, both from their original Selves, and from the Generality of their Neighbours.—Are they reformed in their Temper, and reformed in their Life?

* 1 *John* v. 19. *Kulai*, *lieth*, as a Babe in its Swaddling-cloaths, without any *Inclination* to rise; *κατακειναι εν φανη*. *Luke* ii. 12.—as a Corpse on the Field of Battle, without any *Ability* to rise; *ο δ' επι χθονι κεκοιταται*. *Iliad*, τ.

† 2 *Kings* vi. 6.

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I grant it. But then it is not any Ability of their own, it is the Influence of the sanctifying SPIRIT, which purges away their Dross; yet not without leaving *some Alloy*.

Ther. Here, *Aspasio*, You certainly strain the Bow, till it breaks. Since Scripture itself celebrates some Persons, as absolutely perfect.—What says *Moses*, the inspired Historian? *Noah was perfect in his Generation* *.—What says the GOD of *Moses*, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived? *Job was a perfect Man and an upright* †.—Consequently, *their* Nature must be entirely cleansed from this hereditary Defilement; and *their* Character confutes your derogatory Representations of Mankind.

Asp. Those eminent Saints were perfect. That is, they were *sanctified throughout*. Sanctified in all their Faculties. No one Grace of Religion was lacking. As in the new-born Infant, there is a human Creature complete: no constituent Part of the vital Frame is wanting: though each is tender; all are very feeble; and none arrived at the full Size.

They were *upright*. This Word seems to be explanatory of the preceding; and signifies an unfeigned Desire, joined with a hearty Endeavour, to obey the whole Will of GOD: excluding, not all Defect, but all *prevailing* Hypocrisy, and *wilful* Remissness.—The Interpretation, thus limited, is of a Piece with their Conduct. If stretched to a higher Pitch, it is evidently inconsistent with the Narrative of their Lives.

Pray, what was your Motive, for decorating the silvan Retirement (which sheltered Us Yesterday) with the Statue of *Elijah*? *Ther.*

* Gen. vi. 9.

† Job i. 1.

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Ther. Because I thought, his solitary Life, and gloomy Temper, suited that sequestered Bower. Because the memorable Adventure, there represented, is, with me, a favourite Portion of sacred History.

Are We pleased with spirited and delicate *Rallery*? Nothing exceeds his pungent Sarcasm, on the stupid and despicable Dupes of Idolatry. Every Sentence is keen as a Razor, and pointed as a Dagger, yet wears the Appearance of the most courtly Complaisance. We may truly say, in the beautiful Language of the Psalmist, *His Words are smoother than Oil, and yet be they very Swords* *.

Are We delighted with Instances of *Magnanimity*? A single Prophet, unsupported by any human Aid, maintains the Cause of Truth, against the King, his Grandees, and hundreds of the apostate Priests. He ventures to stake all his Credit, to risk his very Life, and (what was dearer to Him than personal Credit, or bodily Life) the Honour of the true GOD, and Interests of his holy Religion—to risk all on the *immediate* Interposition of a most surprising Miracle.

Do We admire the Triumphs of *Faith*? His Faith was, in a manner, omnipotent. He prays, and *Torrents* of Fire descend from the Sky, to devour his Adversaries †.—He prays again, and the Sluices of Heaven are shut; there is neither Dew nor Shower for several Years ‡.—A third Time He prays, and the Windows from on High are opened;

Abun-

* 1 Kings xviii. 27. And it came to pass at Noon, that *Elijah* mocked them, and said; Cry aloud; for He is a God. Either He is talking, or He is pursuing, or He is in a Journey, or peradventure He sleepeth, and must be awaked.

† 2 Kings i. 10.

‡ 1 Kings xviii. 1.

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Abundance of Rain waters the Earth *.—On another Occasion, He presents his Supplications, and GOD makes his Feet like Harts Feet. Infomuch that an aged Prophet *outruns* the royal Chariot †.

Asp. I commend your Taste, *Theron*: and am particularly pleased with the Reasons of your Choice.

—But do not you remember, that even the Wonder-working *Tishbite* failed in his Resignation, and failed in his Faith? Eminent as He was for Mortification, He gave way to *unreasonable* Discontent; and, though a Champion for the living GOD, He yielded to *unbelieving Fear* †.—*The Man Moses was very meek, above all the Men which were upon the Face of the Earth* ||: Yet He, even He was provoked in his Spirit, and spake unadvisedly with his Lips §. —Was not *Peter* the Hero among our LORD's Followers? Yet He trembles, more than trembles, at the Shaking of a Leaf; He denies his Divine MASTER, scared by the Voice of a Woman.

Look where-ever We will, We find Proofs of human Depravity; reigning *uncontrouled* in Some, making frequent *Insurrection* in All. It is written on our own Hearts, by the Pen of Experience; the
Finger

* James v. 17, 18.

† 1 Kings xviii. 46.

‡ *Elias*, or rather *Elijah*, was a Man subject to like Passions as We are. James v. 17. Upon which Passage, an eminent Commentator makes the following Remark; "This probably is said, with respect to his Fear and Discontent, manifested 1 Kings xix. 3, 4.—*ὀυσιοναδης* must, I think, imply a State, liable to the irregular Workings of Passion; not free from the *sinful* Infirmities of Nature. Otherwise, it is an Instance foreign to the Purpose; does by no means answer the End designed; which is to encourage the Heart, and strengthen the Faith, even of frail, corrupt, offending Creatures. See Ver. 16.

|| Numb. xii. 3.

§ Psal. cvi. 33.

Finger of Observation points it out, in the Practice of Others.—Even in the Practice of *Those*, who have been Saints of the first Rank, and of the highest Endowments. Yet they were defective.—Defective too, in *that very Quality*, which was their distinguishing Gift; in which they particularly excelled.

Ther. While We are talking, the Day has insensibly stole itself away, and left Us surrounded with *Twilight*. Which is a Sort of Lustre intermingled with Darkness: no Part wholly lucid; no Part wholly obscure.—An Emblem, according to your Representation, of the renewed Soul, and its imperfect Holiness.

Asp. A very just one.—Even where the Gospel shines, still there is an *intercurrent* Gloom of Corruption. Ignorance mixes itself with our Knowledge. Unbelief cleaves to our Faith. Nor is our Purity free from all Contamination.—The Prophet *Zechariah*, foretelling the Establishment of the Gospel Kingdom, and describing the State of its spiritual Subjects, says; *It shall come to pass in that Day, that the Light shall not be clear, nor dark* *. This, as to

* *Zech. xiv. 6, 7.* This Passage seems to be one of the *δυσωνία*, *Things difficult to be understood*. Therefore, I may be pardoned for an Attempt to clear up the Meaning; and not severely censured, even though I should miscarry in the Attempt. *It shall come to pass in that Day, there shall not be Light*, full, unintermitted, and strong; *but now Effulgence* (קרורות *Preciousness*, see Job xxxi. 26.) and Clearness of Vision, *anon Obscurity* (אנפך *Coagulation, Density*) and Dimness of Vision. *Yet it shall be one*, real, determinate Day; whose Duration, whose Properties, and all whose Circumstances, are *known to the LORD*. Thus much He hath graciously revealed by his Prophet, that, during the first Periods of this wonderful

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its *literal* Sense, We now see exemplified in the circumambient Atmosphere. With regard to its *spiritual* Meaning, every true Believer feels it accomplished in his own Breast.

Ther. While You are so vehement, in decrying all human Attainments; consider, *Aspasio*, whether You do not *check* and *dispirit* Us, in the Pursuit of exalted Virtue.

Asp. I suppose, You never expected to be such an Adept in Geometry as *Archimedes*, nor so profound an Astronomer as *Newton*; yet this did not check your Application to the Study of Mathematics, or the Contemplation of the Heavens.—Your Brother the Merchant, I presume, has no Prospect of amassing the Wealth of a *Cræsus*, or the immense Treasures of a *Kouli-Khan* *; yet this does not dispirit Him in prosecuting the Business, which brings Him both Opulence and Honour.

However, *Theron*, so long as you deny the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, I must acknowledge, You act a consistent Part, in being zealous

derful Dispensation, it *shall not be* entire Day, nor entire Night; but a Mixture or Interchange of both. Sometimes Grace triumphant, sometimes Sin rebelling, in the Hearts of Believers. Sometimes Calamity darkening, sometimes Prosperity brightening, the State of the Church. However, at *Even-tide*, when such an Appearance is least expected, it *shall be* unmixed, prevailing, perfect *Light*. Then the Light of the Moon shall be as the Light of the Sun, and the Light of the Sun as the Light of seven Days. Then shall Satan be trodden under Foot, and the *LORD*'s People shall be all righteous.

* The Treasures, which this *Persian* Ravager, this avaritious Barbarian amassed, in his Invasion of the *Mogul*'s Dominions, amounted to more than *eighty-seven Millions* of Money.

ious for the Perfection of personal Obedience. You ought either to *acquire* the One, or to *accept* the Other. Therefore, I shall produce no more Arguments for your Discouragement; but shall comprize the Whole of my Answer, in the Motto to an *Irish Nobleman's Arms*, TRY. Or, if this be too concise, I will subjoin, with a very little Alteration, the Words of a *Jewish King*; "When You have attained what You pursue, *bring me Word again, that I may go, and attain it also* *."

Ther. According to your Account, the most advanced and established Christians, are but like a Company of *Invalids*. Does not this extremely derogate from the Honour of our LORD, considered as the *Physician* of Souls? It seems to make a mere Nothing of Sanctification; and would swallow up *CHRIST* the King, in *CHRIST* the Priest.

Asp. Invalids they are †: and such will continue, till they are dismissed from this great Infirmary, and admitted

* Matt. ii. 8.

† Do not the *best* of Men lament their Ignorance of the divine Perfections, their Slowness of Heart to believe the divine Promises, and the Languor of their Gratitude for inestimable, for innumerable Gifts of the divine Goodness?—Do they not frequently feel Deadness in their Devotions, Disorder in their Affections, and various other Relics of the original Leaven?—Do they not often complain, in the Language of the Apostle, *When I would do Good, Evil is present with me*? And say, with the earliest *Christians*, *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened*. Burdened, not so much with Affliction: those Heroes in *Christianity* had learnt, to *rejoice in Tribulation*. But burdened with a Sense of their spiritual Infirmities, and with the Workings of their inbred Corruption. Which, to a tender and lively Believer, are the *heaviest* of Crosses, and the *most galling* of Loads.—Nay; do not the Heirs of Glory *wash* their

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admitted into that holy, happy, blessed World; Where the *Inhabitant* shall no more say, *I am either in Soul or in Body sick* *.

If the Cure was *never* to be completed, this doubtless would be dishonourable to our Almighty **PHYSICIAN**. But the spiritual Recovery, begun on Earth, and advancing through Time, will be perfected in Heaven, and prolonged to Eternity.—Does this make a mere Nothing of Sanctification? No, but it makes room for a continual *Progress*, and affords Cause for continual *Humiliation*. It reserves a most exalted Prerogative, for the heavenly State and beatific Vision; and perpetually reminds Us of a most important Truth, That our present Blessedness consists, not in being *free* from *all* Sin, but in having *no* Sin *imputed* to Us †.

This Imperfection of our Obedience, instead of confounding, maintains a proper *Distinction* between **CHRIST** the King, and **CHRIST** the Priest. Whereas, if We were perfect in Piety, the priestly Office, with regard to Us, would be superseded. What Need of an Intercessor, to recommend our Prayers? What Occasion for an High-Priest, to bear the *Iniquity of our holy Things* ‡? If some Taint of the original Leaven did not pollute our best Services?

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Neither

very Robes, even their fairest Deeds, and their brightest Graces, in the Blood of the **LAMB**? Which, if they were free from Spot, and void of Impurity, need not be made white in this sacred Fountain. See 2 Cor. v. 4. Rev. vii. 14.

* Isai. xxxiii. 24.

† Psal. xxxii. 2.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 38. *Id est, expiare Peccata, quibus sanctissime ceteroquin Actiones nostrae inquinatae sunt.*

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Neither does this detract from the Wisdom, from the Goodness, or from the Power of **CHRIST**. It rather administers to the advantageous Display of all these divine Attributes.—Of his *Wisdom*; in conducting the Affairs of his Church with such exact Propriety, that the Righteousness of Faith may have its due Honour, and the Sanctification of the **SPIRIT** its proper Esteem.—Of his *Goodness*; in carrying on the Work of Grace, amidst so much Infirmary, and so many Corruptions; and in crowning, with consummate Happiness, such frail undeserving Creatures.—Of his *Power*; in extracting a Variety of Benefits even from—

Ther. Benefits, Aspasio!—Can any Thing beneficial proceed from an Evil, which, according to your own Representation, is so incorrigibly malignant?

Asp. It will tend to make Us *lowly in our own Eyes*. When We remember, that by Nature We are altogether become abominable; that the Remains of this hereditary Plague still adhere to our Minds; that no one Faculty of our Souls, nor so much as a single Action of our Lives, is wholly free from this noisome Infection; how must such a View of Ourselves cover Us with Shame, and lay Us low in Abasement! *Less than the least of all thy Mercies* *, will be the Language of such a One's very Soul.

It will dispose Us to *compassionate Others*. How can We take a Brother by the Throat, and require faultless Perfection in *his* Behaviour, when We Ourselves in many Things offend, in all Things fall short? Every such Consideration rebukes, what I may call spiritual Unmercifulness. It pleads for
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* Gen. xxxii. 10.

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Tenderness and Forbearance to our Fellow-creatures. Is a Monitor within, and whispers that affecting Remonstrance; *Oughtest not Thou to have Compassion upon thy Fellow-servant, since thy Almighty LORD hath such renewed, such unwearied Pity on Thee* *.

It will teach Us to admire the *Riches of Grace*. Shall fallen Creatures, that are taken from the very Dunghills of Sin, and rescued from a Hell of inward Iniquity.—Shall *they*, notwithstanding their total Depravity in a natural; and their innumerable Deficiencies in a renewed State—Shall *they* be admitted into the Bosom of eternal Love? *They* be exalted to the Thrones of Glory, and numbered with the Princes of Heaven? This is Grace, transcendently rich, and divinely free indeed!

Will it not *reconcile* Us to the Approach of *Death*? This, methinks, like Wormwood on the Nipple, or Gall in the Cup, must tend to wean Us from the World. How can We be enamoured with such a Land of Darkness, and such a Vale of Tears? Or why should We covet, when Providence gives the Signal for our Departure, to prolong our Abode in these Territories of Disorder?—Surely, this must incline Us to leave them, every Day, more and more in our Affections; and at last, to leave them, without any Reluctance, by final Dissolution. Leave them, for that better Country, where our personal Righteousness will no longer be defective, like the *waning* Moon; but shine forth with consummate Lustre, like the *meridian* Sun, in the Kingdom of our FATHER.

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* Matt. xviii. 33.

It will *endear* the Blessed *JESUS* in *every* Capacity; as the Stings of the fiery flying Serpents, and the Dearth of the waste howling Wilderness, endeared to the *Israelites* both their miraculous Antidote, and their Bread from Heaven.—They who believe this Truth, must see their inexpressible and incessant Need of *CHRIST*'s Spirit. The Protestation of *Moses*, on a particular Occasion, will be the daily, the hourly Breathing of their Souls; *Carry Us not up hence, unless thy Presence, thy SPIRIT, go with Us* *. For without this Aid, We can discharge no Duty aright, nor successfully resist any Temptation.—They will be exceedingly cautious, not to *grieve* † that sacred Guest, lest He depart from them, and abandon them to the Power of their lurking Corruptions. Knowing, that if *He* abandon them, when such Foes are within, and so many Snares without; their Case will be worse than *Samson*'s, when his Locks were shaven, and the *Philistines* all around Him.

How highly will such Persons value the *Blood* of the Covenant, and the *Intercession* of their great HIGH-PRIEST!—They will no more presume to enter into the Presence of the most High GOD, without a fiducial Reliance upon the atoning and interceding SAVIOUR; than the Sons of *Jacob* would have ventured to appear before the Viceroy of *Egypt*, without the Company of their younger Brother ‡. In all, in all their Intercourse with Heaven, the great PROPITIATION will be their Plea, and the great ADVOCATE their Con-

* Exod. xxxiii. 15.
xliii. 5.

† Eph. iv. 30.

‡ Gen.

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Confidence. — The impotent Man waited at the Pool of *Bethesda*, and the Syrian General dipped seven Times in *Jordan*. These Persons will not only wait, but live by the Fountain opened for Sin and Uncleanness *. They will wash in the sacred sanctifying Stream, not *seven* Times only, but *seventy Times seven*.

When such Sentiments possess the Mind, how dear ! O how dear and desirable will our LORD's Obedience be ! Convinced that We are corrupt, universally corrupt in the very Constitution of our Nature, nothing will quiet our Consciences, or satisfy our Souls, but the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*. — I called, sometime ago, our own Works *Worm-eaten Things*. And must not these Corruptions, if they remain ever so little in our Hearts, depreciate and defile whatever proceeds from them ? Must they not be, in all our Works and all our Duties, like *corroding Vermin*, in the Substance of our Timber, or at the Core of our Fruits ? — Should We not then renounce, utterly renounce, what is tarnished and debased by the Poison of Hell ? And rely, wholly rely, for everlasting Acceptance, on our Divine HIGH-PRIEST ? Who, in his mediatorial Works, as well as in his wonderful Person, is altogether *Light and Perfection* † ; and neither in Him, nor in them, is there any Deficiency or any Darkness at all.

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* Zech. xiii. 1.

† *Light and Perfection* — This is the Meaning of that mysterious Ornament, which, in the grand officiating Robes of the *Jewish* High-Priest, was annexed to the Breast-plate, and stiled *Urim and Thummim*. Only the

Excuse me, *Theron*; I fear, I have been preaching. The Importance of the Text, must form my Apology. It is an *Introduction*, not to the Records of History, or the Transactions of Philosophy, but to the Knowledge of Salvation, and to the Riches of *CHRIST*.

Ther. If my *Aspasio* has been preaching, I can assure Him for his Comfort, that his Audience has been very attentive; and though the Sermon was somewhat copious, the Hearer neither slept nor gaped.—However, I should be glad to have the Whole reviewed, and summed up: that, if it has been large as the Pyramid, it may, like the Pyramid, terminate in a *Point*.

Asp. This then is the State of our Nature.—The Image of the CREATOR is effaced. Wisdom, Righteousness, and true Holiness are lost.—View the Understanding; it is Blindness and Stupidity.—View the Affections; they are Disorder and Rebellion.—View the Will; it is Enmity against GOD, the supreme Good; averse to Things spiritual; but fond even to Dotage, of Things earthly
and

Hebrew Words are in the plural Number, and denote every Degree of Illumination, and all Kinds of Perfection.—Does not this very significantly teach Sinners, Whence to seek their Wisdom, and Where to look for their Perfection? There never was, in all Ages, more than one *Urim* and *Thummim*; and only one Person, in each Generation, was appointed to wear it. And Who is there, in all Worlds, that can give Us heavenly Knowledge, but the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*? What is there, in Ourselves or all Creatures, that can present Us unblameable before GOD, but the Righteousness of *CHRIST*?

and sensual.—The whole Soul is deformed; dis-tempered; and, to every good Purpose, dead.

Mortifying, abasing Views! Methinks, they should be like *Medusa's Head* *, or like *Michael's Sword* †, to all Self-sufficiency and all Self-dependence.—Shall such a Creature pretend to be possessed of those sacred Endowments, which may constitute a proper Recommendation to infinite *Holiness*?—Is such a Creature qualified to perform those righteous Acts, which may bear the Test of inflexible *Justice*? Can such a Creature fulfil that extensive and exalted Law, which allows of no Failure; which demands perfect Obedience; and denounces a Curse on every Transgression?

Should he conceive the vain Hope, or make the vainer Attempt, I would now address Him, as *Jehoaish* formerly answered *Amaziah*.—*Amaziah* King of *Judah*, elated with the little Victories he had obtained over the *Edomites*, began to fancy Himself invincible. Prompted by this foolish Imagination, He challenges *Jehoaish* King of *Israel*, to meet Him in a pitched Battle; and receives this ironical Apologue by way of Reply.—Which, for Gallantry of Spirit and Delicacy of Wit, for Poignancy of Satire and Propriety of Application, has seldom been equaled, perhaps never exceeded.—*The Thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife:*

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and

* *Medusa's Head*, the Poets tell Us, was so monstrous and horrible, that the very Sight of it congealed the Blood. Nay; turned every Beholder into Stone.

† *Michael's Sword*, *Milton* informs Us, was so keen and forcible, that nothing could resist its Edge; whatever it smote, was cut in Pieces.

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*and there passed by a wild Beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the Thistle *.* What are We—when We offer to establish our own Righteousness, or presume to justify Ourselves before the most High GOD—but *despicable Thistles*, that fancy themselves *stately Cedars*? And are not various Temptations, is not every Corruption, a wild Beast of the Desert, which will trample on the impotent Boaster, and tread his haughty Pretensions in the Dust?

• 2 Kings xiv. 9.



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DIALOGUE XIV.



SPASIO was employed in preparing for his Journey. *Theron*, free from Business, and disengaged from Company, had the greatest Part of the Day to Himself. Which he spent, in *re-viewing* the Substance of their late Conferences; not without intermingled Aspirations to GOD, for the Guidance of his Divine SPIRIT.

At Evening, He *went*, like the Patriarch of old, *into the Field to meditate* *: amidst the Calm of Nature, to meditate on the Grace of the Gospel.—The Sky was peculiarly beautiful, and perfectly clear; only where the fine *Indigo* received an agreeable Heightening, by a few thin and scattered Clouds; which imbibed the solar Rays, and looked like pen-file Fleeces of purest *Wool*.—All Things appeared with so mild, so majestic, so charming an Aspect, that, intent as He was upon a different Subject, He could not but indulge the following Soliloquy.

“ How

* Gen. xxiv. 63.

“ How delightful are the Scenes of rural Nature!
 “ Especially, to the *philosophic* Eye, and *contemplative*
 “ Mind.—I cannot wonder, that Persons in high
 “ Life, are so fond of retiring from a conspicuous
 “ and exalted Station, to the Covert of a shady
 “ Grove, or the Margin of a crystal Stream. Are
 “ so desirous of quitting the smoky Town, and noisy
 “ Street; in order to breathe purer Air, and survey
 “ the Wonders of Creation, in the silent, the se-
 “ rene, the peaceful *Villa*.

“ ’Tis true, in the Country, there are none of the
 “ modish, I had almost said, meretricious Orna-
 “ ments of that *false* Politeness, which refines People
 “ out of their Veracity. But an easy Simplicity of
 “ Manners, with an unaffected Sincerity of Mind.—
 “ Here, the solemn Farce of Ceremony is seldom
 “ brought into play; and the pleasing Delusions of
 “ Compliment have no Place. But the Brow is the
 “ *real* Index of the Temper, and Speech the *genuine*
 “ Interpreter of the Heart.

“ In the Country, I acknowledge, We are sel-
 “ dom invited to see the *mimic* Attempts of human
 “ Art. But We, every where, behold the grand
 “ and masterly Exertions of divine Power.—No
 “ *Theatre* erects its narrow Stage; surrounds it,
 “ with puny Rows of ascending Seats; or adorns
 “ it, with a shifting Series of gorgeous Scenery.
 “ But *Fields* extend their ample Area; at first,
 “ lightly clad with a Scarf of springing Green;
 “ then, deeply planted with an Arrangement of
 “ spindling Stalks; as a few more Weeks advance,
 “ covered with a Profusion of bearded or husky
 “ Grain; at last, richly laden with a Harvest of
 “ yellow Plenty.

“ *Meadows*

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“ *Meadows* disclose their beautiful Bosom; yield
 “ a soft and fertile Lap for the luxuriant Herbage;
 “ and suckle Myriads of the fairest, gayest Flowers.
 “ Which, without any vain Ostentation, or jea-
 “ lous Anxiety, rival each other in all the Elegance
 “ of Dress.—*Groves* of various Leaf; arrayed in
 “ freshest Verdure, and liberal of their reviving
 “ Shade; rise, in amiable, in noble Prospect, all
 “ around.—*Droves* of sturdy Oxen, strong for La-
 “ bour, or fat for the Shambles; *Herd*s of sleeky
 “ Kine, with Milk in their Udders, and Violets in
 “ their Nostrils; *Flocks* of well-fleeced Sheep, with
 “ their snowy Lambkins, frisking at their Side; these
 “ compose the living Machinery.—Boundless Tracts
 “ of bending *Azure*, varnished with inimitable De-
 “ licacy, and hung with starry Lamps, or irradiated
 “ with solar Lustre, form the stately Cieling.—While
 “ the early Breezes, and the evening Gales; charged
 “ with no unwholesome Vapours, breeding no pesti-
 “ lential Taint; but fanning the humid Buds, and
 “ waving their odoriferous Wings, dispense a Pro-
 “ fusion of *Sweets*, mingled with the most sovereign
 “ Supports of Health.—This is the School of In-
 “ dustry! This the Magazine of Plenty! And are
 “ they not incomparably *more delightful*, as well as
 “ infinitely *less dangerous*, than those Seminaries of
 “ Lewdness and Impiety, where Sin and Ruin wear
 “ the Mask of Pleasure? Than those Temples of
 “ Profuseness and Debauchery, where *Belial* is daily
 “ or nightly worshipped with, what his Votaries
 “ call, modish Recreation, and genteel Amuse-
 “ ment?

“ Here indeed is no tuneful *Voice*, to melt in
 “ Strains of amorous Anguish, and transfuse the
 “ sickening

300 D I A L O G U E XIV.

“ sickening Fondness to the Hearer’s Breast. No
 “ skilful Artist, to inform the *Lute* with musical
 “ Enchantment; to strike infectious Melody from
 “ the Viol; and sooth away the Resolution and
 “ Activity of Virtue, in wanton Desires, or vo-
 “ luptuous Indolence.—But the *Plains* low; the
 “ *Hills* bleat; and the hollow circling *Rocks* echo
 “ with the universal Song. Every Valley remur-
 “ murs to the Fall of silver Fountains, or the liquid
 “ Lapse of gurgling Rills.—*Birds*, when the chear-
 “ ful Morning rises, or the gentle Evening de-
 “ scends, perched on a thousand Boughs, play a
 “ thousand Airs, wildly yet sweetly harmonious.
 “ And did ever Music exceed their untaught
 “ sprightly Warblings? Or can any Colours out-
 “ vie their gay and glossy Plumage?

“ Charmed therefore with the finest Views; lulled
 “ with the softest Sounds; and treated with the rich-
 “ est Odours; what can be wanting to complete the
 “ Delight? Here is *every* Entertainment for the
 “ Eye; the most *refined* Gratifications for the Ear;
 “ and a *perpetual* Banquet for the Smell; without
 “ any insidious Decoy, for the Integrity of our
 “ Conduct, or even for the Purity of our Fancy.

“ O ye blooming Walks, and flowery Lawns,
 “ surrounded with dewy Landscapes! How often
 “ have *Patriots* and *Heroes*, laid aside the Burden
 “ of Power, and stole away from the Glare of
 “ Grandeur, to enjoy themselves * in your com-
 “ posed Retreats!—Ye mossy Couches, and fra-
 “ grant Bowers, skirted with cooling Cascades!
 “ How many *illustrious* Personages, after all their
 “ glorious

* ————— *Mibi me reddentis Agelli,*
 says *Horace* of his little Country-seat.

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* *Vi*
 Scenes,
 Spirits,

“ glorious Toil for the public Good, have fought
 “ an honourable and welcome Repose in your
 “ downy Lap *?—Ye venerable Oaks, and so-
 “ lemn Groves! Woods, that whisper to the
 “ quivering Gale! Cliffs, that over-hang the
 “ darkened Flood! Who can number the *Sages*
 “ and *Saints*, that have devoted the Day to Study,
 “ or resigned a vacant Hour to healthy Exercise,
 “ beneath your silvan Porticos, and waving Arches?
 “ That, far from the dull Impertinence of Man,
 “ have listened to the instructive Voice of GOD;
 “ and contemplated the Works of his adorable
 “ Hand, amidst your moss-grown Cells, and rocky
 “ Shades.—How *inelegant*, or how *insensible* is the
 “ Mind, which has no awakened lively Relish
 “ for these sweet Recesses, and their exquisite
 “ Beauties !”

But whither am I carried? Is not this *rural En-
 thusiasm*? I find myself talking to Trees; and forget
 the momentous Question, which waits for our De-
 cision. Here then let my Rhapsody cease, and my
 Enquiry proceed.—Does it betray a Want of true
 Delicacy, to be insensible of Nature’s Charms? My
Aspasio thinks, it argues as wrong a Taste in practi-
 cal Divinity, not to acquiesce in the imputed Righ-
 teousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.—To this Doc-
 trine I have always been extremely averse. I set
 myself

* *Virgil* was so smitten with the Amiability of these
 Scenes, that He assigns them as an Habitation for happy
 Spirits, in the Regions of *Elysium*.

————— *Lucis habitamus opacis,
 Riparumque Toros, & Prata recentia Rivi
 incolimus.*

302 DIALOGUE XIV.

myself to oppose it with Objections, drawn from the *Reason* of Things, and from various Passages of *Scripture*. To all which my Friend replied. And though I was scarcely convinced, yet I was silenced by his Answers.

I pleaded for the Sufficiency of our *sincere* Obedience. Especially, when accompanied with *Repentance*, and recommended by the *Merits* of *CHRIST*.—Neither was this Attempt successful. His Arguments, somewhat like the flaming Sword, planted at the Entrance of Paradise, *turned every Way* *; and precluded all Access to Life, on the Foot of our own Duties.

At length, *Aspasio* quitted the defensive, and attacked me in his Turn. He explained the Precepts, and enforced the Threatenings of the divine Law. So *exact* its Tenour! That it demands a perfect and persevering Conformity to every Injunction.—So *extensive* its Authority! That it reaches the inmost Thoughts; and requires Obedience, not barely in the Actions of the Life, but the very Intentions of the Heart.—So *inexorable* its Severity! That it condemns every the smallest Offence, and curses every the least Offender.

This Remonstrance had some of the Terror, and almost all the Effect, of a masked Battery.—It was quite unexpected, and alarmed me considerably.—To push his Advantage, He enlarged upon the *infinite Purity* of GOD. A GOD glorious in Holiness: *Who cannot look upon Evil*, with any Connivance, or without the utmost Abhorrence. Who will assuredly destroy, either the Sin, or the Sinner, from before his Face.

To

* Gen. iii. 24.

DIALOGUE XIV. 303

To complete his Victory, He played off the Doctrine of original *Guilt*, and original *Depravity*.—That I am, by Nature, *a Child of Wrath*. Fallen from GOD by the Apostacy of the first *Adam*. Dead in Trespasses and Sins. My Will, Enmity against GOD: all my Faculties corrupt: every Imagination evil!

After all, He bid me consider—What Fruits must spring, from *such a Nature*?—How they must appear, when compared with *such a Law*?—What they must deserve, when tried before *such a GOD*? And whether I will venture to put myself upon Trial at the divine Tribunal, on the Plea of such Performances?

These, I must confess, are very weighty and startling Queries. If these Representations are true, the Face of human Affairs carries a most gloomy Aspect. Or rather, a most dreadful Storm is hanging over the Children of Men.—*Aspasio* urges me to fly, without any Delay, to the Covert of *CHRIST*'s meritorious Obedience. This, He says, was wrought out, in the Name, and in the Stead of Sinners: this will be admitted, both at the Throne of Grace, and the Bar of Judgment, as their justifying Righteousness.

This, He adds, opens a Way, on GOD's Part, for the largest Emanations and most honourable Exercise of Mercy. On Man's Part, it founds a Title to Pardon, to Life, and every spiritual Blessing.—This Doctrine, especially in such a Connection, begins to put on a *more recommending* Appearance. My Prejudices are really wearing away. I am almost a Convert.

Aspasio

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Aspasio over-heard the Close of these Reflections. Unwilling to interrupt his Friend, in so serious an Enquiry; and desirous to observe the Issue of so interesting a Debate; He had hitherto concealed Himself. But thinking this a favourable Minute, He stepped forward, and said—

Asp. Almost! and why not altogether a Convert? What should hinder my dear *Tberon*, from submitting to so rational a Scheme, with the most entire Acquiescence? What should hinder Him from embracing so comfortable a Doctrine, with the utmost Complacency? Why should he not subscribe, both with Hand and Heart, that divine Decree? *Their Righteousness is of me, saith the LORD* *.

Tber. If, by this Doctrine, the Claims of the Law are answered—If the Perfections of GOD are glorified—If the Interests of Morality are secured—I must acknowledge, it will be more worthy of Acceptance, than I could once have imagined.

Asp. And if all these Points are not gained; gained too in the most eminent Manner; I solemnly declare, that I will never plead for imputed Righteousness more.

But the Claims of the Law are all answered.—For, there is nothing in its sacred Injunctions, which *CHRIST* did not perform; and nothing in its awful Threatenings, which *CHRIST* did not sustain. He fulfilled all its Precepts, by an unspotted Purity of Heart, and the most perfect Integrity of Life. He exhausted its whole Curse, when he hung upon the Cross, abandoned by his FATHER, and a bleeding Victim for the Sins of his People.—This Obedience brings higher Honour to the divine

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* *Isai.* liv. 17.

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DIALOGUE XIV. 305

Law, than it could possibly have received, from the uninterrupted Duty of *Adam*, and all his Posterity, in all their Generations.

The *Perfections* of *GOD*, which were dishonoured by our Rebellion, are glorified.—He appears, by this Method of Justification, inconceivably rich in shewing Mercy; yet steady, inflexibly steady, in executing Vengeance. The *Scepter* of Grace, and the *Sword* of Justice, have each its due Exercise, each its full Scope. The Holiness of the divine Nature, and the Dignity of the divine Government, are not only maintained, but most magnificently displayed. Indeed, it is the peculiar Excellence of this wonderful Expedient, that it renders *all* the divine Attributes supremely venerable, and supremely amiable.

Ther. But are the Interests of *Morality* secured? This is what I am strongly inclined to doubt. And to say the Truth, this is now my principal Objection to your Scheme.

Ass. I shall never blame my Friend, for being vigilant and jealous over the Interests of *Morality*. If our Doctrine had a malignant Aspect on true *Morality*, I would give my Voice against it, and use all my Endeavours to suppress it.—But it is formed with every Tendency to awaken the *utmost* Dread of Sin, and affect Us with the *warmest* Sense of our *CREATOR's* Love. And is not *that* the strongest Barrier against the Encroachments of Vice? Is not *this* the sweetest Inducement to the Practice of *Virtue*?

I am glad to find, that a Jealousy for the Interests of *Morality*, is the chief Obstacle in the Way of your Assent. Because, this Jealousy, I am persuaded,

suaded, is much of the same Nature with those, forbidding and mistaken Apprehensions, which our Ancestors entertained, concerning the *Ocean*. They looked upon the Ocean, as an unsurmountable Obstruction and Bar to universal Society. Whereas, it is in Fact, the very Opening and Avenue to this Society; the only Means of setting on Foot a general Intercourse; and the great Highway to all the Nations of the Earth. What is here affirmed, may, on some future Occasion, be proved.—At present, let me desire you to imagine, rather, may the Blessed SPIRIT enable You to believe, That your Sins *are expiated*, through the Death of *JESUS CHRIST*: That a Righteousness is *given* You, by virtue of which, You may have free and welcome Access to *GOD*; the Merit of which You may plead, in order to enjoy all the Blessings of Time and Eternity.—Then let me ask; Will this *alienate* your Affections from your Almighty *BENEFACTOR*? Will this *irritate* evil Concupiscence, or send You to carnal Gratifications in quest of Happiness? Quite the Reverse. When this Faith is wrought in your Heart, nothing will be so powerful, to produce holy Love, and willing Obedience; nothing so effectual, to refine your Temper, to exalt your Desires, and enable You to overcome the World.

What says the Apostle? *I through the Law am dead to the Law* *. Being made to understand its great Extent, and high Perfection, I have no longer any Hope of Justification, through my own Conformity to its Precepts.—Did this prompt Him, did this embolden Him, to neglect or violate his Duty?

Hear

DIALOGUE XIV. 307

Hear the sacred Writer's own Declaration. I am released from the Rigour and Bondage of the Law; I am directed to *CHRIST* for Righteousness and Salvation; *that I may live unto GOD.* That my whole Life may be devoted to *HIS* Honour, who has brought me into a State so delightful, into a Liberty so glorious.

Ther. This Liberty, I am afraid, will be of very little Service to the licentious and gay World.

Ass. I shall be in no Pain even for the *gay World*, if once they cordially receive this Grace, and are vitally influenced by this Doctrine. Which, far from weakening any one Principle of Piety, adds to every other Motive, the endearing Engagements of Gratitude, and the winning Persuasives of Love.

Nay; I am persuaded, that Multitudes in the gay and licentious World, are held fast in the *fatal* Snare, by their Ignorance of this sweet, alluring, consolatory Truth. They find themselves deeply obnoxious to divine Justice, and feel themselves strongly bound with the Chains of Sensuality. They think, it is impossible to clear the enormous Score of their Guilt; impossible to deliver themselves from the confirmed Dominion of Sin. Therefore, like *desperate Debtors*, they stifle every serious Thought; lest a Consciousness of their long Arrears, and a Prospect of the dreadful Reckoning, should *torment them before the Time* *.

But if they were informed, that the infinitely merciful *SON* of *GOD*, has undertaken to redeem such undone and helpless Sinners—That He has thoroughly expiated the most horrid Transgressions,

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and procured even for ungodly Wretches *, all the needful Supplies of strengthening Grace—That, instead of being prohibited, they are *invited* to partake, *freely* to partake, of these unspeakable Blessings—Were they acquainted with these glad Tidings of the Gospel; did they really believe these glad Tidings of the Gospel; their Chains, which now are like Steel and Adamant, would *become like a Thread of Tow, when it toucheth the Fire* †. Yes, my Friend; these Truths, if once revealed and received in their Hearts, would be an infallible Method to *make them free* †.

What shall I say more, to obtain my *Theron's* Approbation? Shall I point out and plead the most illustrious Precedents?—GOD the FATHER is well pleased with this Righteousness of our REDEEMER. He expresses his Complacency by the most emphatical Words: *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth* †. In CHRIST and his Righteousness, GOD is not only pleased, *but delighted*: his *very Soul*, every Perfection of the GODHEAD, with ineffable Satisfac-

tion, For those, who have sinned against the Light of Nature, as the Heathens, and against the Light of Scripture, as the Jews. For those, who have denied CHRIST, like *Peter*; blasphemed and persecuted Him, like *Paul*.—Many, that have fallen into great Sins, are ruined for ever, because they do not account the Grace of CHRIST sufficient for their Pardon and Sanctification. They think that they are gone and past all Hope of Recovery; that *their Transgressions and their Sins are upon them*, unpardoned and unpardonable; *therefore they pine away in them, and how shall they live?* Ezek. xxxiii. 10. MARSH. Goss. Myst. Sanct. Chap. x.

† Judg. xvi. 9.
xlii. 1.

† John viii. 32.

‡ Isai.

faction, rests and acquiesces in them.—I said *ineffable*; for He has declared this, in a Manner superior to all the Force of Language, by raising our crucified SURETY from the Dead; by exalting Him to the Heaven of Heavens; and placing Him at his own Right-hand in Glory.

Our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is well pleased. He esteems it his Honour to shine forth as the everlasting Righteousness of his People. It is the brightest Jewel of his mediatorial Crown. In this He *sees of the Travail of his Soul, and is satisfied*. Accounting Himself fully recompensed, for all the Labours of his Life, and all the Sorrows of his Death, when Sinners are washed from their Guilt in his Blood, and presented faultless by his Obedience.

The HOLY SPIRIT is equally pleased with this great Transaction, and its matchless Effects. It is his peculiar Office, and favourite Employ, to *convince* the World of their SAVIOUR's Righteousness. Not only that his Nature was spotlessly pure, and his Conversation perfectly holy; but that from both results a Righteousness, of infinite Dignity, and everlasting Efficacy; sufficient, throughout all Ages sufficient, to procure Acceptance and Salvation for the most unworthy Creatures.

Since then, this Method of Acceptance and Salvation, is excellent and glorious, in the Eyes of the adorable TRINITY—Since it magnifies the Law, and yields the most exalted Honour to its Divine AUTHOR—Since it makes ample Provision for the Holiness of a *corrupt*, and the Happiness of a *ruined* World—Why should my Friend any longer dislike it; oppose it; or treat it with a cold Indifference? Surely, all these grand Recommendations,

are enough to over-rule any little Objections, which may arise from the Suspicions of Timidity, or may be started by the Artifices of Sophistry.

Ther. I know not how it is, *Aspasio*; but I cannot reconcile myself to this Doctrine of imputed Righteousness: notwithstanding all the Pains You have taken, to make me a Convert.

Asp. The Disappointment is mine, but the Loss is yours, *Theron*.—However, let me entreat You, not to reject my Sentiments absolutely, nor to condemn them prematurely. Suppose it possible at least, that they *may* be true; and weigh them in an even Balance.—Learn Wisdom from your *Aspasio's* Folly. I was once exactly in your Situation; saw Things in your Light, and through your Medium.

Conversing, I well remember, with a devout but plain Person, our Discourse happened to turn upon that solemn Admonition; *If any Man will come after ME, let Him deny Himself* *. I was haranguing upon the Import and Extent of the Duty. Shewing, that merely to forbear the infamous Action, is little. We must deny Admittance, deny Entertainment at least, to the evil *Imagination*; and quench even the enkindling Spark of irregular Desire.—When I had shot a random Bolt, my honest Friend replied; “There is another Instance of Self-denial, “to which this Injunction extends, and which is “of very great Moment in the Christian Religion. “I mean, the Instance of renouncing our own “Strength, and our own Righteousness; not leaning on *that*, for Holiness; nor relying on *this*, for Justification.”—I thought the old Man, I

must

* Matt. xvi. 24.

most confess, little better than a superstitious Doctard; and wondered at (what I then fancied) the motley Mixture of Piety and Oddity in his Notions. But now I discern Sense, Solidity, and Truth in his Observation*. Now I perceive, that We ourselves are often the Dreamers, when We imagine Others to be fast asleep.

Ther. You have no Reason to be ashamed, *Aspasio*, of receiving Instruction from your honest Counsellor. For, You know, it was observed by the Ancients, and is now passed into a Maxim;

Πολλὰκι καὶ κητώρος ἀνὴρ μάλα καίριον εἶπεν.

Neither need You suspect, that I shall forget or disregard your Caution, relating to a precipitate Determination of my Judgment. No; I shall endeavour to avoid the Rock, on which my Friend struck; but happily, it seems, escaped Shipwreck. — You may likewise assure Yourself, that, upon a Subject of such exceeding great, of eternal Consequence, I shall not fail to use the most attentive and impartial Consideration. An indolent Supineness, or a bigoted Obstinacy, in this great Crisis of Affairs, would be of all Errors the most inexcusable, and must prove of all Miscarriages the most fatal.

U 4

Asp.

* Milton thought the same, otherwise he would never have put those Words into the Mouth of a divine Speaker.

Thy Merit,
Imputed shall absolve them, who renounce
Their own, both righteous and unrighteous, Deeds;
And live in Thee transplanted, and from Thee
Receive new Life.

Asp. But still You cannot reconcile Yourself—And no Wonder. For this Way of Salvation runs directly counter to the Stream of corrupt Nature. It puzzles our Reason, and offends our Pride.—“What? shall “ We, not work, but believe unto Righteousness *? “ Shall We receive all freely, and reckon Ourselves “ no better than unprofitable Servants! Having no “ thing, nothing whatsoever, that may recommend “ Us to our Maker!”—This is a Method, to which We should never submit; this is a Proposal, which We should always spurn; were not our natural Sentiments rectified, and our high Imaginations abased, by the Power of Grace.

Let me remind You of a little Incident, which You must have read in the *Grecian History*. A certain Stranger came, one Day, to dine with some *Lacedemonians*; who always sat down at a public Table, and were content with the plainest Food. The Gentleman, accustomed to higher Eating, could not forbear expressing his Disgust, at the *homely Provision*.—Sir, said the Cook, You don’t make use of the Sauce.—What do You mean? replied the Guest.—You don’t use hard Exercise; nor habituate Yourself to long Abstinence; nor bring a sharpened Appetite to the Meal.—And You, my dear Friend, I am apprehensive, have not the Sauce; have not the proper Preparative for this salutary Doctrine; which is indeed the Bread of Life, and the very Marrow of the Gospel.

Ther. What Preparative? Did You not just now say? That all was free; and nothing needful, but only to receive the Blessing?

Asp.
• Rom. x. 10.

Asp. True; nothing is needful, as inclining GOD to give; but only as inclining Us to receive. — Would You seek, would You solicit, would You so much as accept, a Pardon from your Sovereign; unless You stood convicted of some capital Crime, or was apparently liable to Condemnation? Neither will sinful Man seek, no nor accept the great Atonement, till He is made sensible, that the Wrath of GOD and the Damnation of Hell, are what He justly deserves; and what, without the Propitiation of *CHRIST*, He must unavoidably suffer.

This then is the Preparative—A Sense of the horrible Filthiness of the least Sin in the Sight of GOD; of the innumerable Sins of our Heart and Life; and of our undone damnable State on this Account.—While *destitute* of these Convictions, our Souls will be like the full Stomach, that lothes even the Honey-comb.—So long as these Convictions are *slight*, and *hover* only in the Imagination; We shall be like *Gallio**, listless, indifferent, and *caring* for

* *Acts* xviii. 17. A late Commentator, of distinguished Eminence, has attempted to vindicate *Gallio's* Conduct; and would represent it, as an amiable Instance of *Prudence and Moderation*.

According to my Apprehension, this *Roman Governor* acted a Part, both irreligious and unjust,—*Irreligious*, because he refused to hear the Apostle's Defence; which was the most likely Means of his Conversion and Salvation. As one great End, why Providence permitted the Preachers of the Gospel to be *brought before Rulers and Kings*, was, that such an Appearance might serve us, *μαρτυριον αὐτοῖς*, *Matt. x. 18.* *for a Testimony* (not against, as We translate the Word, but) *to them*. That even the Potentates of the Earth, prejudiced and supercilious as they were, might hereby have an Opportunity, of hearing

for None of these Things.—But when they are deep, and penetrate the Heart; then the Righteousness of a REDEEMER will be sweet, tasteful, and inviting. Sweet as Myrrh and Frankincense to the Smell; tasteful as Milk and Honey to the Palate; inviting, as Gold and Treasures to the ruined Bankrupt.

Ther. How are these Convictions wrought in the Soul?

Asp.

hearing the *Christian* Doctrine, and seeing its Efficacy on the Spirits of Men.—*Unjust*, because He permitted *Sophenes*, then an innocent Person, afterwards a Disciple of *CHRIST* (1 Cor. i. 1.) to be so illegally treated, and outrageously abused, without interposing for his Rescue. Here was evidently a Breach of the Peace; a manifest Violation of the Laws. Of *this* therefore, as a civil Magistrate, He ought to have taken Cognizance. However He might fancy Himself discharged from the Obligation, of attending to the Gospel, or protecting its Preachers: however He might imagine Himself authorized, to treat divine Truths with Contempt; and call *the Striving for the Faith*, a Wrangling about Words and Names.—“Words and Names only!” Far otherwise, *Gallio*. The Question, concerning *JESUS CHRIST* and his Salvation, is pregnant with the Life of the World, and of greater Moment than all Things under the Sun.

Besides; if the HOLY SPIRIT intended to fix a Mark of *Approbation*, rather than a Brand of *Infamy*, upon the *Proconsul's* Behaviour; I cannot but think, it would have been expressed in a Manner, different from —και εδεν τῶν τοῦ Γαλλιωνι ἐμελεν. Which, if it be the Language of Applause, requires some more than ordinary Skill in Criticism, to understand it aright. But, if it be the Voice of Censure, is obvious and intelligible to every Reader.—Should farther Proof be wanted, We may compare this Incident with the Behaviour of *Sergius Paulus*, on a like Occasion; and with the Encomium given Him, on that Account by unerring Wisdom. *Act* xiii. 7.

DIALOGUE XIV. 315

Asp. By the Law in the Knowledge of Sin. Consequently, by the Law is the Conviction of our undone State. Let Us therefore endeavour to understand the Law of GOD : how pure, how extensive, how sublimely perfect it is.—Then, judge of our spiritual Condition, not from the *flattering* Suggestions of Self-love, nor from the *defective* Examples of our Fellow-creatures, but by this *unerring* Standard of the Sanctuary.—Above all, let Us beseech the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, to send his enlightening SPIRIT into our Hearts. For indeed, without the enlightening Influences of the SPIRIT, We may have the divine Law in our Hand ; We may comprehend its grammatical Meaning ; yet be like blind *Bartimeus* under the meridian Sun. It is the blessed SPIRIT alone, who can rend the Veil of Ignorance from our Minds ; and shew Us, either “ the wonderful Things of GOD’s Law,” or the glorious Mysteries of his Gospel. In this Sense, our polite Poet * speaks a Truth, as singularly important, as it is elegantly expressed :

He from thick Films shall purge the visual Ray,

And on the sightless Eye-balls pour the Day.

Will You give me leave to propose another Expedient ? Which, I believe, may be considerably serviceable in this particular Case. Which, I am assured, will be greatly advantageous in many other Respects.

Ther.

* Mr. Pope, in his charming Poem, entitled *The Messiah*.

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Ther. Backward as I am to adopt your Doctrine, I am no Enemy to my own Interest. Therefore, shall not only give You leave to propose, but give You Thanks for communicating, so valuable an Advice.

Asp. It is, in reality, none of mine. It was long ago recommended by your old Acquaintance *Horace* *. It consists in *Keeping a Diary*.

Compile a secret History of your Heart and Conduct.—Take notice of the Manner, in which your Time is spent; and of the Strain, which runs through your *Discourse*. How often the former is lost in Trifles, how often the latter evaporates in Vanity.—Attend to the *Principle* from which your Actions flow; whether from the steady habitual Love of GOD, or from some rambling Impulse, and a customary Propensity to please Yourself?—Minute down your Sins of *Omission*. How frequently You neglect to glorify your CREATOR; to edify your Fellow-creatures; and to improve Yourself in Knowledge and Holiness.—Observe the Frame of your Spirit in *religious Duties*. With what Reluctance they are undertaken, and with what Indevotion performed; with how many Wanderings of Thought, and how much Dulness of Desire.—How often, in transacting *common Affairs*, You feel the inordinate Sallies of Passion, the Workings of evil Concupiscence, or the Intrusion of foolish Imaginations.

Register

* *Ille velut fidei Arcana Sodalibus olim
Credebat Libris: neque si male cesserat usquam
Decurrens alio, neque si bene: quo fit, ut omnis
Votivâ pateat veluti descripta Tabellâ
Vita Senis.*

HORAT. Sat.

DIALOGUE XIV. 317

Register those *secret* Faults, to which None but your own Conscience is privy, and which None but the all-seeing Eye discerns.—Often review these interesting Memoirs. Frequently contemplate Yourself in this faithful Mirror. And don't be afraid, to see your Wants and Weaknesses; Depravity of your Heart, and the Iniquity of your Life.—An Artist, sometime ago, took a *Survey* of your Estate. Drew the Form, and measured the Dimensions, of each Inclosure. Pictured out every Hedge, and scarce omitted a single Tree, which grew upon the Premises.—Act thus with your Will, your Understanding, your Affections. These are your noble *internal Demesne*. Of which None but Yourself can be a competent Surveyor.

Ther. It is unreasonable and preposterous, I must acknowledge, to be minutely exact in meaner Matters, and to use no Accuracy of Inspection in the most momentous Affairs. To have a correct Draught of our Lands, which are a *transient* Inheritance; and no Map of that *everlasting* Possession, the Soul.

Assp. Gratify me then, my dear *Theron*, in this Particular. As I purpose to set out very early in the Morning, I shall insist upon it; that You do not rise before your usual Time, in order to compliment my Departure. But I now make it my *last* Wish, and my *parting* Request, that You will, for some Months at least, keep a Diary.

You have wondered at my Opinion, concerning the Corruption of our Nature, and the Insufficiency of our Righteousness. This may seem strange, this may appear shocking, to a Mind *unacquainted* with itself. But, when You have searched your Heart, by this Probe; when You have felt the Pulse of
your

your Soul, by Self-examination: then, You will be better able to judge of my Sentiments, and enter into the Reasons of my Faith.

By this Means, We shall also discover the Sins, which most easily beset Us; which most frequently elude our Vigilance, and baffle our Resolution. We shall learn, *how* to post our Guard; *when* to exercise the strictest Watch; and *where* to direct the Artillery of Prayer.—In a Word; We shall learn, better than from ten thousand Volumes, to KNOW OURSELVES. A Knowledge, which was supposed, by the antient Philosophers, to descend from Heaven*; and which, I believe, our *Christian* Divines will allow, has a happy Tendency to lead People thither. Because, of all other Preparatives, it best disposes them for that blessed REDEEMER, who is the Way, the only Way to those blissful Mansions.

Now I have mentioned a *Way*, let me suppose You traveling through an unknown Country. You come to a Place, where the Road divides itself into two equally inviting Parts. You are at a loss, which Track to pursue. Whose Direction will You choose to follow? That Man's, who has passed through *neither* of them? That Man's, who has passed through *one* of them only? Or that Man's, who has passed and repassed them *both*?—To wait for an Answer, would be an Affront to your Judgment. Only let me observe, that the last is your *Assasio's* Case. He has traveled long, and proceeded far, even in *your* Path. All, that Circumspection and Assiduity; all, that Prayer and Self-denial; all, that Fasting and Alms,

* *E Caelo descendit, prout Cassiodorus.*

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DIALOGUE XIV. 319

Alms, and every other Means of Grace, could do; in order to establish a Righteousness of his own, has been done. But to no Purpose.—He has also trod every Step in the Way, which he recommends to his beloved Friend. He has made the Trial, concerning the Righteousness, *without Works*, or the Righteousness of GOD imputed. He can set his *Probatum est*, to whatsoever He advises on this Subject; and may venture to say, with his Divine MASTER, *We speak that We do know* *, and testify that We have experienced.

Ther. I am sorry to observe, that the Night is coming on, and our Conversation almost at an End. My Regret is increased, by the Consideration of your intended Journey.—Though Business obliges You to depart; it will, I hope, afford You Leisure to write. This will be some Compensation for the Want of your Company.

Yonder Sun is sinking below the Horizon, and just taking his leave of our Earth. To retard the departing Radiance, at least to alleviate the approaching Loss, those western Clouds catch the Rays; and reflect them to our View, in a most amusing Diversity of Colours. By this Means, We enjoy the great Luminary in *his Beams*, even when *his Orb* is withdrawn from our Sight.—An epistolary Correspondence has something of the same Nature. Letters may be called, the Talk of absent Friends. By this Expedient, they communicate their Thoughts, even though Countries, Kingdoms, or Seas intercept their Speech. You must, therefore, promise me this Satisfaction. That I may converse with my *Aspasio* by the

* John iii. 11.

320 DIALOGUE XIV.

the *Pen*, when I can no longer have an Intercourse with Him in *Person*.

Ass. You have anticipated me, *Theron*. Otherwise, what is now my Promise, would have been my Request.

I cannot but take notice of another Particularity, in that magnificent Assemblage of Clouds. How they varied their Appearance, as the Lamp of Day changed its Situation.—A little while ago, those Curtains of the Sky, were streaked with Orange, or tinged with Amber. Presently, they borrow the Blush of the Rose, or the softened Red of the Pink. Ere long, they glow with Vermilion, or deepen into Crimson. Soon succeeds the Purple, more beautiful and grand than any imperial Robe; and as soon (thus transient is all sublunary Grandeur!) gives place to the *sable Veil* of Evening, or saddens into the *gloomy Pall* of Night.—Such, I trust, will be the Issue of my *Theron's* present Apprehensions. All his splendid Ideas of human Excellency and Self-righteousness, will become faint; will lose their imaginary Lustre; till, at length, they fade away, and darken into absolute *Self-abasement*.—Then, the Grace of free Justification, will be amiable, will be desirable, as the Beauties of the Dawn, breaking upon the Shades of Night. Then, You will make no Difficulty, to say with the Psalmist and with the Apostle; *Blessed is the Man, unto whom GOD imputeth Righteousness without Works* •.

• Rom. iv. 6.



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they varied their Appearances, as the Lamp of Day
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For long they glow with Vermilion, or deepen into
L E T T E R S.

L E T T E R I.
A S P A S I O to T H E R O N.

Dear THERON,
I AM now at the Seat of my worthy
Friend *Camillus*; where Business and
Inclination will fix me for some Weeks.
— This Evening we had a most pleasing
Ramble. I have met with nothing so
agreeable, since I left your House, and lost your
Company.

The Time was just arrived, and the Scene was
fully opened, which furnished our great Poet with
his fine Description :

Now was the Sun in western Cadence low,
 From Noon; and gentle Airs, due at their Hour,
 To fan the Earth now wak'd, and usher in
 The Evening cool.

At this Juncture, *Camillus* invited me to take the Air.—We walked, several Times, along a close shady Alley, arched with the Foliage of *Filberts*. Here, hid from every Eye, and the whole World withdrawn from our View, We seemed like *Monks* strolling in their Cloysters.—Turning short at the End, We enter a parallel Range of majestic and uniformly spreading *Walnut-trees*. This Transition, was somewhat like advancing, through a low Porch, into the Isles of a magnificent *Cathedral*. The broad Leaf, and large Trunk, of those lordly Trees—their very diffusive Spread, added to their prodigious Height—give them an Air of uncommon Dignity. It swells the Imagination with vast Ideas, and entertains Us with a romantic Kind of Delight, to expatiate amidst such huge Columns, and under such superb Elevations, of living Architecture.

Quitting our Cathedral, We turn once again, and pass into a grand Colonnade of *Oaks*: so regular in their Situation, so similar in their Size, and so remarkably correspondent in every Circumstance, that they looked like the *Twins* of Nature; not only belonging to the same Family, but produced at the same Birth.—Through these lay a Walk, strait, spacious, and gracefully long. Far exceeding the last in the Extent of its Area, though much inferior in the Stateliness of its Cieling. It put me in mind of that divine Benignity, which has allowed Us the

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Space of *six* Days, for the Prosecution of our own comparatively low Affairs; and set apart but *one* in seven, for the more immediate Attendance on the sublime Duty of worshipping our CREATOR.

This Walk was covered with the neatest *Gravel*; and not a Weed to be seen, nor one Blade of Grass, through the whole extended Surface. It stole into a continual Ascent; yet so very gradually, that the Rise was scarce discernable, either by the searching Eye, the toiling Feet, or the panting Breath.—At the Extremity, a handsome *Summer-house* shewed a Flight of Steps, and half a *Venetian* Door. The rest of the Building was hid by the low-hung clustering Branches.

As soon as We enter the Apartment, *Camillus* throws open the Left-hand Sash; and, with it, a most enlarged and amusive *Prospect*.—The Structure appeared situate on the Brow of a considerable Eminence. Whose Sides were partly confused and wild with broken Rocks, partly shagged and perplexed with thorny Shrubs. The Spectator is agreeably surprised, to find Himself accommodated with so elegant a Mansion, on the Summit of so rude and ruinous a Spot.—But, how greatly is his Surprise and his Satisfaction augmented, when he casts his Eye forward; and beholds the beautiful *Meads*, which, from the Foot of this ragged Hill, stretch themselves into a Space almost unmeasurable!

Through the Midst of this extensive Vale, which was decked with the finest Verdure, and replenished with the richest Herbage*, a *River* rolled its copious Flood.

X. 2

Planis

Porrectus Spatiis, & multæ prodigus Herbae.

HOR.

Flood. Rolled, in a thousand serpentine *Meanders*; as though it was loth to leave the flowery Scene; and made repeated Efforts to prolong its Stay amidst such lovely Objects.—Till, at last, having loitered in its own Labyrinths, and wandered more than twice the Length * of the Meadows; having held a Mirror to the aspiring Poplars, and bending Willows; having paid a welcome Salute to several ornamented *Villas*, and passed through the Arches of two or three curiously pendent Bridges; it seemed to meet the Sky, and mingle with the Horizon.

Opposite to the Front Window, a *Cascade* fell from the adjacent Stream. It flashed and foamed along the broad Slope, indented with small Pits, and jagged with protuberant Stones. The Current, vexed and embarrassed, seemed to *rave* at the intervening Obstacles; and forcing its rapid, indignant, sonorous Way, struck the Ear with a Peal of liquid Thunder. These fretful Waters—let our *angry* Passions observe the Admonition, and follow the Example—soon forgot their Rage; soon recovered their Temper. Collected into a little Rivulet, they ran off in calm and silent Lapse, till they lost themselves amongst Beds of Osier, and Plantations of Alder.

The River, widening as it flowed, was parted here and there by several little Islands. Scattered, as it were, by the Hand of Chance; and raising their green Heads in the Midst of the lucid Stream; they presented a most unexpected and most pleasing Spectacle. Some of them were tufted with Reeds, and

* The River Ouse in *Bedfordshire*, by its multiplied Windings, makes a Space of eighteen Miles by Land, more than *eighty* by Water.

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and surrounded with Rocks and Shoals, the unmo-
lest Resort of Swans. Some adorned with stately
Porticos, and splendid *Alcoves*; the graceful Retreats
of rural Pleasure. One, larger than the rest, seemed
to be furnished with cool embowering Walks;
fitted for studious Retirement, or sedate Contem-
plation.—On either Side of the charming Valley,
Towns and Villages lay thick, and looked gay;
adding Ornament and Variety to the Scene, and
receiving innumerable Advantages from the passing
Wave.

The Whole recalled to an attentive Observer's
Mind, that amiable and august Spectacle, which the
*Syrian** Soothsayer could not behold, without a Rap-
ture of Delight;—*From the Top of the Rocks I see the*
Tribes of JEHOVAH, and from the Hills I be-
hold the Habitations of his chosen People. How
goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob! And thy Tabernacles,
O Israel! As the Vallies, are they spread forth; as
Gardens, by the River's Side: as Trees of exquisite Fra-
grance †, which the LORD hath planted: as Cedars
of stateliest Growth, flourishing beside the Waters.

We had but just looked about Us, when a Mes-
senger came for *Camillus*. As He was called to
settle some private Affairs, I chose to stay in this in-
viting Retreat; and determined to make myself a-

X 3

mends

* Numb. xxiii. 7.

† *Numb.* xxiv. 5, 6. It is well known, that the Word
אֶרְבָּאת is used in the sacred Writings, to denote either a
delightful Perfume, *Prov.* vii. 17. or that *aromatic Plant*,
which produces it, *Cant.* iv. 14.—For which Reason, I
think it very justifiable, to render the Expression, *Trees*
of exquisite Fragrance; and am persuaded, it will be far
more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than *Trees*
of Lign-Alocs.

mends for the Loss of *Camillus's* Company, by beginning a Correspondence with my *Theron*.—We have Pen, Ink, and Paper, in all our rural Retirements; that, if any Thing is started in Discourse, or occurs in Meditation, worthy to be remembered, it may immediately be committed to Writing.

I could not but observe to my Friend, that, fine as the Prospect appeared, there was one Decoration wanting; if some *grand Deformity* may be called a Decoration. The Ridges of a bleak and barren Mountain, or the Skirts of a Sun-burnt tawny Heath, would give *additional Liveliness*, to the ornamented Part of the Landscape. Thus contrasted, their Beauties would acquire a new Charm, and strike with double Vigour.—This Circumstance would shew Us, what wretched Abodes and inhospitable Quarters might have fallen to our Share. And would probably awaken a more fervent Gratitude to the Supreme DISPOSER of Things; who has cast *our* “Lot in a fairer Ground, and given *us* a more goodly Heritage.”

So, a proper Knowledge of the divine *Law*—of its sublime Perfections, and rigorous Sanction—joined with a Conviction of our own extreme Deficiency, and manifold Transgressions—all this would endear the blessed *JESUS* to our Affections, and powerfully recommend his Righteousness to our Desires.—The Remainder of this Epistle, therefore, shall turn upon some Instances of Duty, enjoined in that sacred System. *By which* it may be highly useful to examine our Conduct, and sift our Hearts: *in which*, I believe, we have all fallen short, and are all become guilty: *from which*, We may learn the Imperfection of our best Services, and see the

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the inexpressible Need of a better Righteousness than our own.

The Knowledge of GOD is the Foundation of all vital Religion, and indeed is the Consummation of human Happiness. It is not only Matter of present Duty, but the very Essence of our future Bliss; *This is Life eternal, to know Thee the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom Thou hast sent* *.

—Yet, important and obligatory as it is, are We not very defective in this divine Science? Have We duly acquainted Ourselves with the marvelous Excellencies of the LORD JEHOVAH? His uncontrollable Power, and all-comprehending Wisdom; his unbounded Goodness, and unwearied Patience; his immaculate Holiness, and inflexible Justice; his never-failing Faithfulness, and inviolable Veracity?—Have We, according to the Direction of our *inspired* Tutor, pursued this sacred Study on our Knees †; and sought this most noble of all intellectual Endowments, not merely from Books, but principally at the Throne of Grace. Have We sought it, like that antient *Jewish* Student, with an early Application, and with incessant Assiduity; even “from the Flower, till the Grape was ripe ‡?”

Is that scanty Ray of Knowledge, which perhaps has forced itself through our original Darkness, *operative* on our Affections? Have We loved the LORD our GOD with all our Heart? This is the first and great Commandment ||.—Have We constantly entertained the most magnificent and honourable Thoughts of his sublime Perfections? Is our

X 4

Esteem

* John xvii. 3.

† James i. 5.

‡ Ecclus. li. 15.

|| Matt. xxii. 38.

Esteem for this immensely great and most blessed BEING, high, superlative, matchless? Somewhat like *that*, expressed by the Psalmist; *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? And there is None upon Earth, that I desire in comparison of Thee* *.—Have we been affectionately concerned for his *Glory*, and zealous to advance his holy Religion? Troubled, very sensibly troubled, when our MAKER's Honour has been trampled in the Dust, by licentious Tongues, or flagitious Deeds?

Have We made it our ruling Care, to approve the Whole of our Life, and the most secret Transactions of our Breast, to his all-seeing Eye? Resolved, deliberately resolved to sacrifice, not only our darling Lusts, but even our most valuable Interests, whenever they stand in competition with the good Pleasure of his Will?—In a Word; as the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, with such *vehement* and *inextinguishable* Ardour, have We thirsted after—a brighter Manifestation of his divine Attributes—some sweeter Assurances of his special Love—and an ever-increasing Conformity to his holy Image?

Such was the Temper of those excellent Men, who are characterized in the Scriptures of Truth, as Children of the HIGHEST, and Patterns for our Imitation. This is their Language; *The Desire of our Soul is unto thy Name, and to the Remembrance of Thee. With my Soul have I desired Thee in the Night; yea, with my Spirit within me will I seek Thee early* †.—Neither is such Warmth of Love, and

Fervour

* Psal. lxxiii. 25.

† *Isai. xxvi. 8, 9.* We can hardly tell, which to admire most, the *Beauty* of the Description, or the *Piety* of the Persons. *I have desired*; and not with inactive Wishes,

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Fervour of Desire, any needless or extravagant Pitch of Devotion; but a *reasonable* Service, indispensibly due, from all intelligent Creatures, to the great AUTHOR of their Being—in whom all possible Perfections, with the utmost Exaltation and Dignity, reside—from whom all Manner of Blessings, in the most copious and never-failing Communications, flow.

When We receive, from an absent *Friend*, rich and repeated Presents; Casks of generous Wine, or Jars of delicious Fruit; We feel Ourselves inkindled into a grateful Affection. We honour, We love the Person, who allows Us such a distinguished Place in his Heart; and expresses his cordial Regard, by such a Series of active and tender Benevolence.—The Blessed GOD is a Friend to Us All, infinitely powerful, and equally munificent. We are the constant Objects of his *more than* friendly, of his parental Cares. Every passing Moment is a Messenger of his Patience, and charged with some Token of his Bounty. For *our* Sake, He has diffused Blessings over all the Face of the Earth; and commanded every Element to concur, in ministering to our Accommodation. He has not only adapted his Benefits to our several Wants; but has given them

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but such as prompt to vigorous Endeavours; *I will seek Thee.* And *early*, with the most vigilant Application and unwearied Assiduity.—The Emphasis is very much increased, by the Addition of those lively Words, *with my Soul, yea with my Spirit*; with the whole Bent and Sway of my Affections, and with the steady invariable Determination of my Judgment.—Thus *have I* desired Thee, even *in the Night*; when both the Pursuits and the Thoughts of other People, are sunk and lost in profound Repose. Thus *will I* seek Thee, with a Zeal—*early* as the rising—*constant* as the returning Sun.

a *Diversification*, large as the Scope of our Wishes; and an *Enrichment*, far beyond all that our Fancy could conceive.—Profuse Liberality! Yet small and scanty, compared with his most adorable Benignity in *CHRIST JESUS*.

What? If *GOD*, willing to manifest the superabundant Riches of his Kindness, had made bare the Arm of his Omnipotence; and struck a most miraculous Road through the Surges of the Ocean, to afford Us a safe Passage?—If, to accommodate Us in our Travels, He had brought Waters out of the flinty Rock; and bid the Ravens bring Meat to our Hands, bid the Winds convey Manna to our Doors?—If, to furnish Us with a commodious Settlement, He had dethroned mighty Kings, dispossessed populous Nations, and made the Walls of impregnable Cities fall to the Ground?—If, to further the Dispatch of our Business, or facilitate the Conquest of our Enemies, He had arrested the Sun in his meridian Career, and laid an Embargo upon the Moon, setting out on her nightly Tour?—In short, if to promote our Welfare, He had suspended the Powers, and controuled the Laws of universal Nature; had wrought *all* the Miracles, exhibited in the Land of *Egypt*, or recorded in the Volumes of Inspiration—Should We not think Ourselves under the most inviolable Engagements, to love the *LORD* our *GOD*, *Who had done so great Things for Us*; to love Him unfeignedly and ardently; to love Him with a supreme Affection, far above every other amiable Object?—Yet, We have greater, incomparably greater Obligations to our Almighty *BENEFACTOR*. For (hear O Heavens! wonder O Earth! and let Eternity dwell upon the stupendous

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pendous Truth !) *GOD spared not his SON—his own SON—his transcendently glorious and divinely excellent SON—but delivered him up to the deepest Humiliation, and to the most accursed Death, for Us Men and our Salvation.*

O, *Theron* ! Have We been impressed with *Wonder*, at the Contemplation of this Goodness ? Have our Hearts glowed with *Gratitude*, under a Sense of these Mercies ? Surely, No Man need be convicted of any other Crime, at the great Tribunal, than Insensibility of such Love, and Ingratitude for such Favours. This, without the Accession of horrid Impieties, is enough to leave Him absolutely inexcusable. This is enough to prove Him one of the most *disgenuous*, and most *detestable* of Creatures.

Have We exercised Ourselves in frequent *Thanksgiving* ? Many are the Exhortations to this honourable Duty. *Praise thy GOD, O Sion* : Praise Him for his mighty Acts † :—Praise Him according to his excellent Greatness ‡.*—Innumerable are the Incitements to abound in this pleasant Service. Every Comfort has a Voice, and cries in the Ear of Reason ; O ! that Men would therefore praise the LORD for his Goodness.

* Psal. cxlvii. 12.

† Psal. cl. 2.

‡ Among these Exhortations, We may rank that beautiful and devout Address to GOD, יֵשׁבַּ תְּהִלֹּת יִשְׂרָאֵל, Psal. xxii. 3. *Thou that inhabitest*—Light inaccessible, shall I say ? The Regions of Immensity, or the Ages of Eternity ? No ; but what is a more exalted Character—*The Praises of Israel*. Finely signifying, that Praise is a most acceptable Sacrifice ; which the Divine MAJESTY vouchsafes to regard with peculiar Delight.—Intimating also, that the Exercise of Praise should not be an occasional Thing, like a *transient Visit* to a Stranger's House ; but a daily and almost unintermitted Service, like the *stated Residence* of a Person in his own Habitation.

Goodness. Every Deliverance enforces the Address, and furnishes fresh Materials for the heavenly Employ.—The Man after GOD's own Heart declares, as an inviting Example for our Practice; *I will bless the LORD at all Times: His Praise shall continually be in my Mouth * : Yea, as long as I have any Being, I will sing Praises unto my GOD †.*—Indeed, when We consider the inexhaustibly rich Bounty of GOD our CREATOR, and the inconceivably tender Mercy of GOD our REDEEMER, it is both strange and deplorable, that the Love of GOD is not always prevailing in our Hearts, and the Language of Praise ever flowing from our Lips.

I will not suppose our Character so irreligious, that We have neglected the daily Worship of GOD, either in our Closet, or in our Family.—But, have we prayed with that profound *reverential Awe*, which is due to the HIGH and LOFTY ONE, *who inhabiteth Eternity*?—Have We made our Supplications with that *servent Importunity*, which may in some measure correspond with the extreme Indigence of our State, and the invaluable Worth of the Blessings We crave?—Have our Petitions been attended with that *steady Affiance*, which may glorify the Goodness, the Power, the Veracity of the LORD? May evidently declare, That He is *rich in Mercy*, to *All that call upon Him ‡*: that He is the LORD JEHOVAH, in whom is *everlasting Strength* §: that He is the GOD of Truth, and faithful for ever §. We call Him FATHER: but have We trusted in Him, with that unsuspecting, chearful, filial Confidence, which a Child reposes on the Fidelity and

Indul-

* Psal. xxxiv. 1.

x. 12.

† Psal. cxlvi. 2.

‡ Isai. xxvi. 4.

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§ Deut. xxxii. 4.

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Indulgence of such an earthly Relative? Have We not entertained, too often entertained narrow, dishonourable, beggarly Apprehensions, concerning the Treasures of his Liberality, and the Bowels of his Pity? Rating them even lower than our Parent's, our Friend's, or our own.

Have We been careful to carry the Spirit of our Prayers into our *ordinary* Conversation; and waited at the Door, as well as approached to the Throne of Grace?—Amidst the Intervals of our solemn Devotions, have We cultivated an *ejaculatory* Intercourse with Heaven? How highly would the ambitious Courtier prize, and how frequently would He use a privy Key, which should give Him, at all Hours, free Admittance to his Sovereign. This Key of Admittance, only to an infinitely more exalted POTENTATE, We all possess in the Practice of mental Aspirations to GOD.—It is certainly the noblest Employ, and will be the richest Improvement of our Thoughts, to send them in such short Embassies to the KING of Kings; and to derive, by such occasional Sallies * of Faith, a renewed Supply from

* We have, in Scripture, very remarkable Instances of the Success, which has attended *ejaculatory Prayer*.—Observe *Nehemiah*: He stands before *Ahasuerus*, apprehensive of the Monarch's Displeasure, yet desirous to solicit Him in Behalf of *Jerusalem*. To be delivered from his Fears, and to obtain his Desires, what Method does He use? The mean and servile Arts of Flattery? No; but the manly and devout Expedient of Prayer. *I prayed*, says the Patriot, *to the GOD of Heaven*.—We cannot suppose, that He fell on His Knees, or spoke with His Lips, while He continued in the royal Presence. But he darted up his Soul in *silent* Supplication. Which Supplication “pierced the Clouds;” reached the eternal Throne; and returned not again till a Blessing was sent. Such

from the Fountain of all Good. How great a *Loss* then must it be to our spiritual Interests, and how contemptuous a *Disregard* of the ever-present JEHOVAH,

Such as totally averted the Wrath, He dreaded; and procured Favour and Assistance, much larger than He expected. *Nehem. ii. 4.*

When *David* heard, that *Ahitophel*, the ablest Politician in his Kingdom, was revolted to *Absalom*; sensible what a *Loss* his Affairs had sustained, and what an Advantage the rebellious Party had acquired, He betook himself to his GOD. He said not for an Opportunity of Retirement, but instantly and upon the Spot cried; O LORD, I pray Thee, turn the Counsel of *Ahitophel* into Foolishness!—A short Address, but very efficacious. HE, who disappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, sent a Spirit of Infatuation among the Rebels; and inclined them to reject the Advice of that judicious Statesman. Which false Step brought upon their horrid Enterprize, the Ruin it deserved; and chagrined the wretched Traitor, even to Rage, Frenzy, and Suicide. 2 *Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 23.*

Amyntor, at a memorable Period of his Life, was under great Distress of Conscience, and harassed by violent Temptations. He made his Case known to an experienced Friend; who said, *Amyntor*, You do not pray.—Surprised at this, He replied; “I pray, if such a Thing be possible, too much. I can hardly tell, how many Times
“in the Day, I bow my Knee before GOD; almost
“to the Omission of my other Duties, and the Neglect
“of my necessary Studies.”—“You mistake my Meaning, dear *Amyntor*. I do not refer You to the Ceremony of the Knee, but to the Devotion of the Heart.
“Which neglects not any Business, but intermingles
“Prayer with all. Which, in every Place, looks unto
“the LORD; and, on every Occasion, lifts up an indigent longing Soul for the Supply of his Grace. This
“ (added He, and spoke with a peculiar Vehemence)
“this is the Prayer which all the Devils in Hell cannot
“withstand.”—This, I would farther observe, is the Prayer, which brings down somewhat of Heaven into the Heart; in which I would myself desire to abound; and would earnestly recommend, to all my Acquaintance, and all my Readers.

HOVAH, to omit entirely, or long to discontinue, this most beneficial Practice of habitual Adoration? —Can You, my dear *Theron*, acquit Yourself on this Article of Enquiry? Has not every Day of your Life been a Day of Negligence in this Respect? Been a perpetual Disobedience to our SAVIOUR's Injunction; *Men ought, in this Manner, always to pray, and not to faint* *.

Have We sanctified the *Sabbath*? Has the LORD's Day, with all its solemn and sacred Offices, been our Delight?—Have We remembered that distinguished Portion of our Time, as *Jacob* remembered the delightful Interview at *Peniel*? Have We expected it, as Merchants expect the Arrival of a richly laden Vessel? Have We improved it, as Husbandmen improve the shining Hours of the Harvest?—Have We wholly laid aside every earthly Engagement; *not speaking our own Words* †, nor allowing Ourselves in any Gratifications, which may interrupt our Communion with the FATHER of Spirits? Has *one Day in his Courts been preferable to a Thousand* ‡, spent either in the Works of our Calling, or in the Scenes of Recreation?—Have the Memorials of our REDEEMER's dying Merits, and the Seals of his unchangeable Loving-kindness, been relished as a Feast, and prized as a Portion?

Have We honoured GOD's holy *Word*?—What greater Mark of Disesteem, than to despise a Person's Discourse; and not to think his Speech worthy of our Notice? Especially, when He addresses Us with very great Seriousness, and with the utmost Affection. In our Bible, the GOD of Glory speaks to his

* Luke xviii. 1.
lxxxiv. 10.

† Isai. lviii. 13.

‡ Psal.

his Creatures; speaks with the most persuasive Energy, and with all the Yearnings of parental Tenderness. Have We listened to our CREATOR, with Reverence and Delight; and rejoiced with Trembling at—*Thus saith the LORD?*

Have We searched the Oracles of Truth, not merely as *Scholars*, but as *Sinners*; not from a Spirit of Curiosity, or with an Air of Formality, but with a Solicitude and Ardour, becoming Persons who enquire after the SAVIOUR of their lost Souls? Have We submitted our inmost Thoughts to their impartial Scrutiny; to receive Conviction of Sin from their awful Remonstrances, and to hear the Sentence of Condemnation at their righteous Bar?—Have We been willing to suffer the Reproach of *conscious Baseness*, while they have ripped up the Disguises of Falshood; laid open our secret Iniquities; and brought all our evil Ways to Remembrance? Thus *Josiah* acted. *His Heart was tender, and He humbled Himself before the LORD; He rent his Clothes, and wept before the LORD; when He heard the Words of the Book of the Law* *.

Have We hid the glad Tidings of the Gospel, within our Memories, within our Hearts? Have We been diligent to suck this *Honeycomb* † of Grace, by concomitant Meditation, and subsequent Prayer?—Have We valued the precious Promises, as Gentlemen of Wealth value the Writings of their private Estates; or as enfranchised Bodies esteem the Charter of their public Privileges?—Have We, like the princely Patriarch, longed for those Words of *Edification, Exhortation and Comfort*, more than for our necessary

* 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27.

† Cant. v. 1.

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necessary Food *? And, like the royal Prophet, prevented the Night-watches, that We may be occupied in those Statutes † and Ordinances of Heaven?

We have hitherto confined the Examination, to a few Instances of the *affirmative* Kind; how dreadfully will the dark Account be swelled, if, instead of Love and Obedience, there be Hatred and Opposition—*Hatred* of the Name, Glory, and Worship of GOD—*Opposition* to his Interest, Kingdom, and Service!

GOD is *infinite Perfection*: worthy of all Admiration: exalted above all Praise. Yet do not our Thoughts more frequently, or more naturally turn upon our own Accomplishments, than upon the illustrious and shining Attributes of the ALMIGHTY? This is, in itself, the most shameful *Dotage*; and, in GOD's Sight, the most abominable *Idolatry*. Yet, let Us observe, and We shall probably find, that, as Damps arise in the Mines, or Fogs in the fenny Grounds, so naturally, and so copiously do these self-admiring Reflections arise in our depraved Minds.

GOD is an *everlasting King*. Have We not often resisted his Authority, by open Disobedience; often disputed it, by secret Murmuring? Have We not, as far as in Us lay, deposed the omnipotent SOVEREIGN, and exalted *Self* into the Throne? Made *Self*-will our Law, and *Self*-pleasing our End? Thus adding Sacrilege to Rebellion?

GOD is transcendently *gracious* and *amiable*.—Amiable as He is, have We not too often spurned Him from our Affections, by being *Lovers of Pleasure*,
VOL. II. Y

* Job xxiii. 12.

† Psal. cxix. 148.

sure, more than Lovers of GOD *? Gracious as He is, have We not too long turned our Backs upon Him, by forgetting his Benefits; being insensible of his Presence; and not having so much as a real Desire to serve or glorify Him? O! how common, yet how heinous, is this Iniquity! It is a total Departure from the great End of our Existence. It renders our whole Life one continual Sin. Nay, it is a Complication of Sins; it is *every* Transgression in Embrio. What is the Stubbornness of caressed Children, and the Negligence of entrusted Servants? What is the Indifference and Disdain of obliged Dependants? What the Deceit and Treachery of chosen Favourites? Is not each of these Practices, odious, vile, provoking? Yet they are all included in that one grand Evil, an habitual Forgetfulness of the blessed GOD.

Awake, Conscience! Summoned and charged as Thou art, in Behalf of thy supreme LORD, bear an impartial Testimony. Then, I am persuaded, the *Pharisee* in our Breasts, like the Man unfurnished with the Wedding-garment, must be speechless and confounded; must stand self-convicted and self-condemned.

Is our Heart warm with *brotherly Love*?—Good-manners will put Expressions of Civility into our Mouths; but has a Power from on High implanted the royal Law of Charity in our Breasts? The Character of a Gentleman requires a Deportment accessible, obliging, and courteous: has the Spirit of *Christianity* taught Us to love, *not in Word* or plausible Appearance only, *but in Deed and in Truth* †?—

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* 2 Tim. iii. 4.

† 1 John iii. 18.

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Do We love our Neighbours, not merely on account of some Relation they bear Us, or some Services they have done Us? But, because they are Creatures of the blessed GOD; are the Objects of his providential Care; and capable at least of being conformed to his Image? Do We love them, because We hope, that the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* has bought them with his Blood; and has made, or will make them Partakers of his SPIRIT, and Members of his Mystical Body?

Are We sincerely concerned for their Credit and Interest; for their present Welfare, and eternal Happiness? Do We embrace all Opportunities of promoting, both the one, and the other? Embrace them with the *same* Alacrity, and improve them with the *same* Zeal, which actuate Us in pursuing *our own* Felicity?—If they exceed Us in all that is amiable, and all that is prosperous, do We contemplate their superior Excellence with a real Complacency, and their more abundant Success with a real Satisfaction? Is *Selfishness*, that exorbitant Encroacher, kept within Bounds; and do We seek, *not* barely *our own*, but *another's Wealth*?

Do We dislike to hear, and abhor to spread, defamatory Tales; even when our Adversaries are the Men, whom they tend to blacken?—When rudely affronted, or causelessly abused, do We pity the Offenders, for the *Wrong* done to their own Souls; rather than kindle into Resentment, at the *Indignity* offered to Ourselves?—When greatly injured, are We slow to Anger, and not easily provoked? Are We much more willing to be reconciled, than to foment Displeasure, and prosecute Revenge? In a Word; do We love our *Enemies*; *bless* them, *that*

*curse Us; do Good to them, that hate Us: and pray for them, which despitefully use Us, and persecute Us *?*

—Without this loving and lovely Disposition, *We abide*, says the Apostle, *in Death* †; are destitute of spiritual, and have no Fitness for eternal Life.

Let me add—Are all our Graces, and all our Works, *clothed with Humility*? This should be the Dress, in which they severally appear; as well as the Bond of Connection, which unites them all ‡.—Do We maintain a very low Opinion of our own Accomplishments, and *in Honour prefer Others to Ourselves* ||? Habitually sensible, that We are less than the least of the divine Mercies, and the very chiefest of Sinners?

I might easily have branched out all the preceding Subjects, into a much greater Variety of interrogatory Articles. But I intend only to present You with a Specimen. Your own Meditations will enlarge the Sketch, and supply what is defective. Only let me beg of You, my dear Friend, to try your State by this Touchstone; to prove your Conduct by this Standard. And may the FATHER of Lights give You an Understanding, to discern the

* *Matt. v. 44. What Manner of Love is this?* How disinterested! how extensive! how triumphant! Must not all the boasted *Benevolence* of the Philosopher and Moralist, strike Sail to this evangelical Charity? Must not both Moralist and Philosopher acknowledge the Necessity of a *divine* Operation, thus to enlarge, exalt, and refine their social Affections?

† 1 John iii. 14.

‡ 1 Pet. v. 5. *Dress, Bond*—The unusual Word *ενοχλω* is supposed to have *both* these Significations.

|| Rom. xii. 10.

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the exact Purity and sublime Perfection of his holy Law!

Have You lived in the *uninterrupted* Observance of all these Duties; avoiding whatever is forbidden, and obeying whatever is commanded? Your outward Behaviour, I know, has been free from notorious Violations; but has your inward Temper been preserved, from all ungodly Motions, and from every irregular Desire? Is there no Enmity in your Heart to any of the Precepts; nor any Backwardness, nor any Failure, in performing each and every Injunction?

When You put these Questions to Yourself, remember; That every Sin is a Contempt of infinite Majesty, and supreme Authority. That every Sin pollutes the Soul, and renders it a Kind of Hell; is a Departure from GOD, and an Imitation of the Devil. That the Wages due to every Sin, is eternal Death; and the Doom denounced on every Sinner, is an everlasting Curse.—Remember; That if You fail in *one* Point, or in *any* Degree, You are guilty of all *. Nay; if your Conformity be not *persevering* as well as *perfect*, You incur the Penalty, and are abandoned to Condemnation—UNLESS, renouncing all your *personal* Performances, You place your whole Affiance on a SAVIOUR's Atonement, and a SAVIOUR's Righteousness. —I think, You will not dare to put the Issue of your everlasting State upon the former Footing. Which is not only hazardous, but must be inevitably ruinous. You will infinitely rather choose, to acknowledge Yourself a poor Insolvent; and plead the unsearchable Riches of your REDEEMER's

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* James ii. 10. Gal. iii. 10.

Obedience; and rely on the unparalleled Merit of your REDEEMER's Blood.

To those who believe, the Law, though *strict*, is not *terrible*. Because, be its Precepts of Holiness ever so extensive, they have been most completely fulfilled by their glorious SURETY. Be its penal Sanctions ever so rigorous, they have been satisfied to the utmost, by their great MEDIATOR.—Believers, therefore, may make their Boast of their adorable SPONSOR. They may *sit under his Shadow with great Delight* *. While the Thunderings of Mount *Sinai*, and all the Terrors of the legal Dispensation, tend only to increase and quicken the refreshing Sense of their Safety. Just as the Possessor of a plentiful Estate, in some peaceful and prosperous Country, reposes Himself under the Shade of his Vine, or the Shelter of his Fig-tree; and, hearing of the *Wars* which embroil, or the *Plagues* which depopulate other Nations, tastes, with augmented Relish, his own Felicity.

Let me close with the affectionate and emphatical Wish of an inspired epistolary Writer. That the *LORD of Peace* may give my dear Theron Peace—*always—by all Means* †! Then I shall think, my Wishes are accomplishing, and this Blessing is at the Door, when He sees the *Purity* of the divine Law—sees the *Depravity* of his own Nature—and the *Impossibility* of being justified, without an Interest in the great MEDIATOR's Righteousness. That Righteousness, which, as it is the only Hope, and the constant Joy, is therefore the darling Theme, of

Your ever faithful

ASPASIO.

P. S.

* Cant. ii. 3.

† 2 Thess. iii. 16.

P. S. Shall I *abridge* the preceding Letter, and contract the Whole into those two great Commandments, which made the first awakening Impressions on my own Mind? *Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with ALL thy Heart: Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as THYSELF.*—Amazing! said your *Aspasio*. Are *these* the Commands of GOD? As obligatory, as the Prohibition of Adultery, or the Observation of the Sabbath? Then has my whole Life been a *continual Act* of Disobedience. Not a Day, no, nor an Hour, in which I have performed my Duty.—This Conviction struck me, as the Hand-writing upon the Wall struck the presumptuous Monarch.—It pursued me, as *Saul* pursued the *Christians*, not only to my own House, but even to distant Cities.—Nor ever gave up the great Controversy, till, under the Influences of the SPIRIT, it brought me *weary and heavy laden to JESUS CHRIST.*



LETTER II.

THERON to ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

MORE than three Weeks are elapsed, since You favoured me with your improving Company. During which Interval, I have frequently

recollected the most material Parts of our late Discourses. I have carefully considered, both the Doctrines You advanced, and the Answers You returned to my several Objections.—I have often reviewed your valuable Letter; have used it as a *Touch-stone*, to examine my State; and have, with great Punctuality, observed your parting Advice.—I have sat, every Evening, for a *Picture* of my *Mind*; and have endeavoured to take a true unflattering Draught of all its distinguishing Qualities. And, if the Diary is a faithful Mirror, if it does not aggravate the Deformity of my Features, I shall be absolutely out of Conceit with myself: I shall ever entertain the *meanest* Opinion of my own, either moral or religious Qualifications.

Where is that intense and supreme *Love* of GOD, which his transcendent Perfections challenge, and his ineffable Goodness claims?—Where that firm and joyful *Reliance* on *CHRIST JESUS*, in any Degree proportioned to his infinite Merits and inviolable Promises?—Where that cordial and tender Affection for my *Fellow-christians*, which is due to the Servants of a Divine REDEEMER; the People whom He ransomed by his Agonies, and purchased with his very Blood?—Where is the Incense of holy Contemplation and refined Desire? Where the Flame of fervent Devotion and ever active Zeal? Such as become the *living Temple* of GOD, in which his most immaculate and glorious SPIRIT vouchsafes to reside.—These fundamental Graces, like the grand Organs in the animal System, should impart Health to the Soul, and spread the Beauty of Holiness through all the Conversation. But these, alas! far from beating with

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a *vigorous* and *uniform* Pulse, hardly heave with Life; only just struggle, now and then, with some faint, intermitted, uneven Throws.

How seldom do my Actions spring from Gratitude to the everlasting BENEFACTOR, or aim at the Glory of his super-excellent MAJESTY?—In addressing the KING immortal, invisible, how languid are my Affections, and how wandering is my Attention? How great my Unbelief, and how little my reverential Awe?—I receive innumerable Mercies; but where are my Returns of correspondent Thankfulness? I am visited with many gracious Chastisements; but without proper Resignation, or due Improvement.—Alas for my heartless Devotions, my lifeless Virtues, and the Multitude of my *refined Iniquities*!—Hid behind the Mask of outward Decency, and some customary Forms of Religion, I was altogether unacquainted with my spiritual State. I fancied myself *rich, and increased with Goods, and to have Need of Nothing*: even while I was *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked* *.

If I look back, and review the Years of Youth and Manhood, what has been the Tenour, what is the Aspect of my Life? More like a desolate and horrid Wilderness; than a cultivated Garden, or a fruitful Vineyard.—In *Youth*, what sordid Gratifications of Appetite! In *Manhood*, what base Complicances with a wicked World! In *both*, what Sholes of evil Inclinations have polluted my Heart! What Swarms of vain Imaginations have debased my Thoughts! What frothy and unprofitable Words have dropt from my Lips!—By all which, how have

I

* Rev. iii. 17.

I disobeyed, and how dishonoured GOD! How have I denied, and how crucified the LORD JESUS CHRIST!—And yet suppose myself, all the while, to be *good enough*!

It is something unaccountable, that a Person of my inquisitive Disposition, should, through the Course of so many Years, be such an utter *Stranger* to Himself. I wonder at my own *preposterous* Folly!—To travel into foreign Countries, and visit the most renowned Cities of *Europe*; yet never step over the Threshold, nor look within the Apartments of my own Breast.—To carry on a Correspondence with my Friends, even in the remotest Nations; and never enter upon a Conference, nor hold any Intelligence with my own Heart!—To enquire after News from the Fleet, News from the Army, News from the Court; yet exercise neither Curiosity nor Care, with regard to the Hope of Heaven, and the Concerns of Eternity!—What egregious Misconduct is this! A most pernicious Error, in the Oeconomy of religious Life.

Sometimes, I have cast a transient Glance on my *outward* Behaviour; but never extended my Search to the Delinquent, the Traitor, the Rebel *within*.—And even my outward Behaviour has been surveyed, with as much erroneous Partiality, as superficial Levity. It has been compared, not with that *exact* and *sublime* Standard, the Scriptures of Truth; but, as in the Case of the self-deceiving *Pharisee*, with the unjust, extortionate, adulterous Practices of some other People. From whence I most unwarrantably concluded, That, being not quite so abandoned as the most profligate Creatures, my Character must be good, and my Condition safe.—But, Thanks to
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your last friendly Letter, and the searching Expedient it recommended, I am now in a different Way of Thinking.

It is strange to recollect, and indeed it is shameful to confess, the many *Artifices* which I have used, to put a *Cheat* upon myself.—Sometimes, I have fancied, that the divine Law could never be so strict, as to condemn Us inexorably, only because We continue not in all its Precepts.—Sometimes, I have pleaded the Infirmary of our Nature, and endeavoured to make the Works of Darkneſs appear only as pitiable Failings.—Sometimes I have taken Refuge in the Excellency of our Church, and plumed myself with the borrowed Feathers of a religious Profession.—At other Times, I have soothed my Conscience to Rest, by a Punctuality of Attendance on Places, or a zealous Attachment to Forms. And all this, to seduce, cajole, and betray myself—betray myself, first into a vain *Conceit* of my own Endowments; then into a contemptuous *Disregard* of *CHRIST*; and at last into eternal *Destruction*.—But now I see my Guilt; I apprehend my Danger; and feel my helpless Condition.

Indeed, my *Aspasio*, I am now convinced, that the darkest Colours cannot be too dark, for the Pourtrait of my spiritual State. I see myself overspread with an habitual Depravity, and cannot forbear crying out, with the abashed Leper; *Unclean! Unclean*!*—The sacred Oracles in no wise misrepresent fallen Man, when they describe Him as *altogether become abominable* †. They are far from under-rating human Works, when they denominate them *filthy Rags*.

* Levit. xiii. 45.

† Job xv. 16.

Rags *. Rags they are, if We consider their great Imperfection; filthy Rags, if We advert to their manifold

* *Isai.* lxiv. 6. Does not *Theron* misapply this Text? Can it be intended to discredit the Qualifications of the Upright? Is it not rather a Brand set upon the Works of the Wicked; whose very "Sacrifices are an Abomination to the LORD?" Or, a Rebuke given to the specious Performances of the Hypocrite; who is precise in the Form, but destitute of the Power of Godliness? Or, may it not refer to ritual Observances; in Contradistinction to moral Duties, and spiritual Endowments?

The disparaging Character must not, I think, be confined to ritual Observances; because it is expressly said, *ALL our Righteousnesses*; of every Kind; be what they will; no Exception is made.—Neither can it be appropriated to the formal Hypocrite, much less to the notoriously Wicked; because, those very Persons, who are the Subject of this Assertion, declare in the Context; *LORD, We are thy People; Thou art our FATHER; We shall be saved.*—So that it seems intended, not so much to stigmatize any particular Behaviour, as to stain the Pride of all human Glory.

Besides; the Prophet speaks of *himself*; *WE all are as an unclean Thing.* Which, however strange or unreasonable it may appear, is the very same Charge, to which He pleads guilty in another Place; *Who is me! I am undone! For I am a Man of unclean Lips!* Not that He was defiled with any gross Pollutions; nay, He was a Saint of the most distinguished Lustre; but *his Eyes had seen the KING, the LORD of Hosts.* He was under the clear Manifestations of a GOD, glorious in Holiness, inflexible in Justice, and infinite in all Perfections.—Amidst these Manifestations, the Impurity of his Heart and Nature, were not only apparent, but glaring; such as overwhelmed Him with Abashment, and, till *CHRIST* was applied in a Type (*Isai.* vi. 7.) filled Him with Terror.

In such Circumstances, and under such Views, all our moral Virtues and evangelical Graces, all our Exercises of Devotion and Acts of Charity, most necessarily appear both defective and polluted. By no means proportioned to

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manifold Defilements. And, since the Nature of GOD is irreconcilably averse to all Contamination; since the Law of GOD requires unspotted Perfection; O! *Who can stand before this holy LORD GOD* *, in any Accomplishments of his own?

When I farther reflect, that I have only a very obscure Glimpse of the divine Purity, and am a mere Novice in the Knowledge of my own Heart; how am I amazed at the lofty Apprehensions which I once formed, concerning the *Dignity* of my Nature, and the *Integrity* of my Conduct! All owing to Ignorance, the grossest Ignorance of myself and the Scriptures.—How do I shudder to think, that, in expecting Justification from the Law, I was resting the Welfare of my immortal Soul, not on the Strength of a Rock, but on the Point of a Dagger.—I was going to the decisive Tribunal, flushed with the falsest Hopes, and charged with a Set of glittering Sins: going, like poor deluded *Uriah* †, not with any valid Credentials, but with *the Ministration of Death* ‡ in my Hand.

Though

to the Demands of the Law, nor sufficient for our Recommendation to the Supreme LAW GIVER — no more than a few *tattered* Rags, can claim the Character, or perform the Services, of a complete Suit—no more than a few *filthy* Rags are fit, to dress the Bride for her Nuptials, or the Courtier for a Birth-night.

But there is a Righteousness—blessed be divine Grace!—spotlessly pure and consummately excellent: a Righteousness, which answers all that the CREATOR requires, and supplies all that the Creature needs: to prove this momentous Point, and to display this unspeakable Gift, is the Design of the following Sheets.

* 1 Sam. vi. 20.

† 2 Sam. xi. 14, 15.

‡ 2 Cor. iii. 9.

Though I cannot but acknowledge the Arrogance of these Pretensions, yet loth, very loth is my Pride, to renounce the pleasing Absurdity. Self-love and Self-importance has searched, and searched again, for something excellent. They can hardly brook the Humiliation, of imploring all *sub Formâ Pauperis* *. With what Reluctance is a Sinner brought to confess Himself, sinful in every Duty, sinful in every Capacity! Strange Perverseness!—But the Charge is undeniable. However unwilling, I must plead guilty. THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES †, AND FOUND WANTING ‡, is written on all I am, all I have, all I do.—If I am thus defective, even in my own Estimation; if I am utterly condemned, at the Bar of my own Conscience; *What then shall I do, when GOD riseth up?*

* That is, under the Character of a *poor Destitute*, or as a Beggar sues for his Alms.

† *Weighed in the Balance*—As the following Story may serve to illustrate this fine Expression, and enforce the momentous Sentiment, the Reader will permit me to relate it.

In the Reign of King *Charles I.* the Goldsmiths of *London* had a Custom, to weigh several Sorts of their precious Metal, before the Privy Council. On this Occasion they made use of Scales, poised with such exquisite Nicety, that the Beam would turn (the Master of the Company affirmed) at the two hundredth Part of a Grain. Noy, the famous Attorney General, standing by and hearing this, replied; *I should be loth then to have all my Actions weighed in those Scales.* With whom I heartily concur, in relation to myself. And since the Balances of the Sanctuary, the Balances in GOD's Hand, are infinitely more exact; O! what Need have We of the Merits and Righteousness of *CHRIST*, to make Us acceptable in his Sight, and passible in his Esteem!

‡ Dan. v. 17.

up? And when HE visiteth, what shall I answer Him *?

I now see the *Necessity* of an imputed Righteousness. Without some such Object for my Trust, I am undone. I long therefore to hear your *Arguments* in its Behalf. And I must declare to You, if it can be satisfactorily proved from the Scriptures, it is the most comfortable Doctrine in the World, and worthy of all Acceptation.

A Letter upon this Subject, would be a singular Favour, and, I hope, an equal Blessing to

Your obliged, and affectionate,

THERON.



LETTER III.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

THOUGH all all your Letters give me Pleasure, none was ever so highly pleasing, as your last. I look upon it with the same secret Joy, as a compassionate Physician observes some *very favourable* Symptoms, in the Crisis of a beloved Patient's Distemper.

What You ask, I shall, without any farther Preface, attempt to execute. If my Attempt proves satisfactory

* Job xxxi. 14.

satisfactory to your Judgment, I am sure, it will be the most likely Means, of *healing* your Conscience, and *calming* your Fears.—When We perceive the odious Depravity of our Nature; when We discern the horrible Iniquity of our Lives; and are sensible of that tremendous Wrath, and everlasting Vengeance, which are due to such guilty Creatures: *then* nothing can be found, that will speak effectual Peace, nothing that will administer solid Comfort, but only the vicarious Sufferings, and the imputed Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.

To this Purpose one of the wisest and best of spiritual Guides expresses Himself; *Has Sin abounded?* As undoubtedly it has, in our Heart, and our Life: *Grace has much more abounded*, in the Obedience, and the Merits of our REDEEMER.—Nay, *has Sin reigned?* Exerted its malignant Power, in the most extensive and most destructive Manner; rendering Us subject *unto Death*, both temporal and eternal? *Even so has Grace reigned*; exerted its benign Efficacy, in a Manner yet more triumphant; not only rescuing Us from Guilt and Ruin, but restoring Us *to everlasting Life* and Glory. And all this *through* the Righteousness, the complete meritorious Righteousness, brought in by *JESUS CHRIST* our LORD*.

You enquire after the *Proofs* of this imputed Righteousness. From a Multitude I shall select a few. Sufficient, I hope, to make it appear—That this is the declared Doctrine of our Church, and the avowed Belief of her *most eminent* Divines—That it is copiously revealed through the whole *SCRIPTURES*;

* Rom. v. 21.

TURES; revealed in many express Passages, and deducible from a Variety of instructive Similitudes.

Hear the Language of our Common Prayer, in a very affecting and solemn Address to the ALMIGHTY: "We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful LORD, trusting in our own Righteousness."—If we may not, if we dare not, rely on our own Righteousness, when we approach the *eucharistic Table*; much less may we depend upon it, when we are summoned to the *decisive Tribunal*.—Should you ask, On what we are to depend? The Exhortation to the Communion furnishes an Answer; "On the meritorious Death and Passion of CHRIST, whereby *alone* we obtain Remission of Sins, and are made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Collect, appointed for the Festival of *Circumcision*, has this remarkable Introduction; "Almighty GOD, whose blessed SON was *obedient to the Law for Man*." In what Sense, or with what Propriety, can this be affirmed? Unless CHRIST's perfect Obedience be referable to Us, and accepted instead of ours? On any other Interpretation, I should think, He was obedient, not for *Man*, but for *Himself*.

Should the artful Critic give some other Turn to these Passages, it will avail Him but little. Because the Church, her own *best* Expositor, has explained the Meaning of such Phrases, and put the Matter beyond all Doubt. In her eleventh Article she says; "We are accounted righteous before GOD only for the Merits of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."—The Doctrine relating to Pardon of Sin, had been stated in a preceding

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Article. This displays the Method, whereby Sinners may appear righteous in the Sight of GOD, and in the Court of Heaven; so as to recover the divine Favour, and obtain a Title to eternal Bliss. — This is done, not by any *native* Righteousness, not by any *acquired* Righteousness, but wholly by an *imputed* Righteousness. The two former Methods are so far from constituting our reconciling and justifying Righteousness, that they have no Share in it; they contribute nothing towards it; but are totally excluded from it. We are accounted righteous, and accepted as such, ONLY (mark the Expression) ONLY through the meritorious Obedience, and propitiating Blood of our great MEDIATOR.

The Homilies are, if it be possible, still more explicit, and more cogent. In the Homily concerning the Salvation of Mankind, we read the following Words; — “ The Apostle toucheth three Things, “ which must go together in our Justification. On “ GOD’s Part, his great Mercy and Grace. On “ *CHRIST*’s Part, the Satisfaction of GOD’s “ Justice, or the Price of our Redemption, by the “ Offering of his Body, and Shedding of his Blood, “ with Fulfilling of the Law perfectly. On our “ Part, true and lively Faith in the Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*, which yet is not ours, but “ by GOD’s working in Us.” — You see, according to the Judgment of our venerable Reformers, not only the Offering of *CHRIST*’s Body, and Shedding of *CHRIST*’s Blood, but also his *perfect Fulfilling* of the Law, are the adequate Price of our Redemption. All these act conjointly, they sweetly harmonize, in the great and glorious Work.

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To suppose their Disunion, is a *doctrinal* Mistake, somewhat like that *practical* Error of the Papists, in severing the sacramental Wine from the sacramental Bread; administering to the Laity the Symbols of the slaughtered Body, but with-holding the Symbols of the streaming Blood.

There are *other* Clauses in the same Homily, which set the Seal of the Church to our Sentiments. I shall content myself with transcribing one from the Conclusion.—“*CHRIST*, says that Form of sound Words, is the Righteousness of all them, that do truly believe. He for them paid their Ransom by his Death. He for them fulfilled the Law in his Life. So that now, in *HIM*, and by *HIM*, every true *christian* Man may be called a Fulfiller of the Law; forasmuch as that which their Infirmary lacked, *CHRIST*'s Righteousness hath supplied.”—This Authority is as clear, as the Doctrine authorized is comfortable. May the former sway our Judgment! May the latter cheer our Hearts!

The Homily on *CHRIST*'s Nativity informs the Reader, that the Design of our *LORD*'s Incarnation was—“To give Light unto the World, and call Sinners to Repentance; to fulfil the Law for Us, and become the Propitiation for our Sins; to cast out the Prince of this World, and destroy the Works of the Devil.”—We have all broke the Law; We are all unable to keep the Law; therefore, the Blessed *JESUS* fulfilled the Law—fulfilled it, in each and every of its Demands—fulfilled it, in the *highest* Degree of Perfection—and, what is of all Considerations most delightful, fulfilled it for Us. His Obedience took the Place

of what We were obliged to perform, under the Covenant of Works; and is not only the meritorious, but also the constituent Cause of our Justification.

So that — if there be any Worthiness in our LORD's most holy Nature; any Merit in his Exercise of the sublimest Virtues; any atoning Efficacy, in his Submission to the most ignominious Sufferings, and tormenting Death—these, according to our Standard-system of orthodox Divinity, are the *Ground* of a Sinner's Justification.—And, according to the Dictates of the most unbiassed Reason, these are the *best*, the *surest* Ground, that the Heart can wish, or the Imagination conceive.

Does it not, from the preceding Quotations, appear; That the Doctrine of Justification through the imputed Righteousness of our REDEEMER, is far from being disclaimed by the *established Church*? —I am sorry, but constrained to own, that We rarely find any considerable Strictures of this great evangelical Peculiarity, in our *modern* theological Discourses. Yet there have been Preachers of the highest Repute for Learning, for Judgment, and for Piety, who professedly maintained this leading Truth of the Gospel.

The devout Bishop *Beveridge*, in his *Private Thoughts*, has left upon Record the following very remarkable Acknowledgment. Which, if it suited his State of eminent Holiness, cannot be too humbling, my dear *Theron*, for your Lips and for mine. “ I do not remember, neither do I believe, that I ever prayed, in all my Life-time, with that Reverence, or heard with that Attention, or received

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“ceived the Sacrament with that Faith, or did any
 “Work with that pure Heart, and single Eye, as
 “I ought to have done. Infomuch, that I look up-
 “on all my Righteousness, but as filthy Rags; and
 “it is in the Robes only of the Righteousness of the
 “SON of GOD, that I dare appear before the
 “MAJESTY of Heaven.”

The fervent and affectionate Bishop *Hopkins* *
 speaks in perfect Consonance with his Brother of *St.*
Asaph.—“The Law was given Us, not that We
 “should seek Justification by the Observance of it,
 “but finding it impossible to be justified by fulfilling
 “it, We should thereby be driven to *CHRIST*’s
 “Righteousness; who hath both fulfilled it in Him-
 “self, and satisfied for our transgressing of it; and
 “therefore saith the Apostle, *The Law was a School-*
 “*master, to bring Us unto CHRIST; that We*
 “*might be justified by Faith.* To this End it was
 “promulged, that seeing the Strictness of its Pre-
 “cepts, the Rigour of its Threatenings, and withal
 “being convinced of our Impotence to fulfil its
 “Commands, We might be urged by its Terrors
 “to fly to *CHRIST*, and find that Righteous-
 “ness in Him which may answer all the Demands
 “of the Law.”

Bishop *Reynolds* †, styled by his Cotemporaries, and
 not without Reason, *A walking Library*, bears his
 Testimony in the following Words;—“*CHRIST*
 “as our Surety paid our Debt, underwent the Curse
 “due,

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* See his Sermon on *John* vii. 19.

† See his Treatise intitled *The Life of CHRIST*.—
 Which, as well as all his other Works, abound with
 striking Sentiments; have much Elegance of Diction, a
 copious Variety of Learning, and a lively animating Spi-
 rit of evangelical Piety.

" due to our Sins, and bare them all in his own
 " Body on the Tree: became subject to the Law
 " for Us; and representatively in our Stead fulfilled
 " all the Righteousnesses the Law required, active and
 " passive. For Sin being once committed, there
 " must be a double Act to Justification; the Suffer-
 " ing of the Curse, and the Fulfilling of Righteous-
 " ness anew. The one, a Satisfaction for the In-
 " jury We have done to GOD; as our JUDGE:
 " the other, the Performance of a Service which
 " We owe unto Him, as our MAKER.
 " To this illustrious Trinitate, let me join Bi-
 " shop Davenant. Who, for his great Abilities; and
 " unquestionable Integrity, was appointed one of our
 " religious Plenipotentiaries, at the renowned Synod
 " of Dort. In his very valuable Exposition of the
 " Epistle to the Colossians, He writes to this Effect:
 " Ye are complete in CHRIST. Ye are furnished,
 " in that all-sufficient REDEEMER, with
 " whatever is requisite to everlasting Salvation.
 " With Wisdom; since it is the Consummation of
 " this noble Endowment, to know CHRIST
 " and Him crucified. With Righteousness; because
 " He has perfectly satisfied the Law; and
 " thoroughly
 " In this Respect principally (says our Author, en-
 " larging upon the Text) are Believers complete, because,
 " though destitute of any Righteousness, that may properly
 " be called their own, CHRIST has graciously enriched
 " them with His. With DAVENANT, in Epist. ad Coloss.
 " Col. in Com. 10.

Let me beg leave to intimate, That this Exposition of
 the Epistle to the Colossians, for Perspicuity of Style; and
 Accuracy of Method for Judgment in discerning; and
 Fidelity in representing the Apostolic Meaning; for
 Strength of Argument in refuting Errors; and Felicity of

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“thoroughly expiated our Guilt. With Sanctifi-
 “cation; because his SPIRIT dwelling in our
 “Hearts, mortifies our corrupt Affections, and re-
 “news the Soul after the Image of its CREA-
 “TOR.”

Let me bring up the Rear with a Testimony,
 which, for Clearness, Solidity, and a full Represen-
 tation of the evangelical Doctrine, might very justly
 have claimed a Place in the *Van*. It is taken from
 an Author, whom the general Consent of our Na-
 tion has distinguished with the Title of *Judicious*.
 The judicious *Hooker*, in a Treatise on Justification,
 says; — “It is a childish Cavil our Adversaries so
 “greatly please themselves with, exclaiming, that
 “We tread all *Christian* Virtues under our Feet;
 “because We teach, That Faith alone justifieth.
 “Whereas, by this Speech, We never meant to
 “exclude either Hope or Charity from being always
 “joined as inseparable Mates with Faith, in the
 “Man that is justified; or Works from being add-
 “ed, as necessary Duties, required of every justified
 “Man; but to shew, that Faith is the only Hand,
 “which putteth on *CHRIST* to Justification;
 “and *CHRIST* the only Garment, which being
 “so put on, covereth the Shame of our defiled Na-
 “tures, hideth the Imperfection of our Works,
 “and preserveth Us blameless in the Sight of
 “GOD: before whom, otherwise, the Weakness
 “of our Faith were Cause sufficient to make Us
 “culpable, yea, to shut Us out of the Kingdom of

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“Hea-
 “Invention in deducing practical Doctrines, tending both
 “to the Establishment of Faith, and the Cultivation of Ho-
 “liness — is, perhaps, inferior to no Writing of the Kind;
 “and richly deserves to be read, to be studied, to be imi-
 “tated, by our young Divines.

"Heaven, where nothing that is not absolute can enter."

You will allow the sagacious Bishop *Sanderfon* * to sum up the Evidence; or rather to make an important Remark on the Whole of the Controversy. That great Light of the Church, both in casuistical and practical Divinity, observes;—"The Tidings of a REDEEMER must be blessed and welcome News, to those that are sensible of their own Poverty, and take it of Grace." Our eagle-eyed Divine penetrates into the true Cause of the prevailing Averseness to this evangelical Doctrine. It is founded on the State of the Heart, more than upon any Force of Argument. People are but little, if at all, sensible of their spiritual and moral Indigence; of the Defects which depreciate, and the Desilements which fully, whatever they have, and whatever they do. Nay, strongly tinged with Pride, they would be themselves the *Alpha*, and suffer the Blessed *JESUS* to be no more than the *Omega*, in procuring their eternal Salvation. Therefore they can hardly be reconciled to the humbling Character of an *Eleemosynary*; one who lives wholly upon the Alms of the Gospel, and is dependent upon Grace for his All.

Whereas, was this grand Obstacle once removed; were Men convinced of Sin, of exceeding Sinfulness in their worst Estate, and of remaining Sinfulness in their best; they would soon be convinced of Righteousness †, of the absolute Necessity and inestimable Worth of a REDEEMER's Righteousness. They would no longer dispute against it, but cordially receive it; entirely rely on it; and adore the

Good-

* See his Sermon upon *Isai*. lii. 3. † John xvi. 8.

Goodness, the transcendent and unutterable Goodness of GOD, in providing it.

I think, in one of our Conferences, I undertook to produce my Vouchers from the antient *Fathers*. Let me now subjoin two or three Attestations of this Kind.—From *one* of which You will perceive, that those early Writers had a considerable Degree of Clearness upon the Point. From the *other* You will see, that, far from rejecting the Doctrine, they embrace it with Delight and Rapture. And if You will admit of the *last*, You cannot be startled at any Thing, which I shall advance upon the Subject.—Let me only premise in general, that, if those Authors are not so copious and explicit, with regard to the Imputation of *active* Righteousness; they abound with Passages, which evince the *Substitution* of *CHRIST* in our Stead. Passages, which disclaim all Dependence on any Duties of our own, and fix the Hopes of a Sinner entirely upon the Merits of his SAVIOUR. When this is the Case, I am not very solicitous about any particular Forms of Expression; and far from being angry, even though the Words, which I think most significant, are not retained.

Clemens, first of the antient Fathers, and an intimate Acquaintance of *St. Paul's*, wrote an Epistle to the *Corinthians*. It is full of manly Sense, and seraphic Piety. Among other valuable Things, the truly apostolic Man declares; *We are not, in any Respect or in any Degree, justified by Ourselves, but wholly by JESUS CHRIST: not by our own Wisdom or Prudence, which could never find out the Way; not by the Piety of our Hearts, or Works*

of

be hid by an *unrighteous PERSON*; and that the Righteousness of *ONE*, should justify many Transgressors.

The following Words are remarkably strong, and the Sentiments peculiarly bold. But they come from the Pen of the *finest Writer* in Ecclesiastical Antiquity. They have the great Name, and venerable Character of *St. Chrysostom*, for their recommendatory Preface. — *Fear not*, says He, *on Account of any of thy past Transgressions of the Law*, when once *Thou hast fled by Faith to JESUS CHRIST*. The most enormous and the most destructive Violation of the Law, is, *To be with-held by the Consciousness of any Guilt whatever, from believing on CHRIST*. When *Thou dost Faith on Him*, *Thou hast fulfilled*, I might say, *more than fulfilled the Law*. For *Thou hast received a better Righteousness*, than it could ever require. *Thou art possessed of a better Obedience*, than any Creature could possibly pay.

Two or three Witnesses of distinguished Ability, and undoubted Veracity, are a sufficient Confirmation of any Cause. For this Reason, and to avoid a tiresome Prolixity, I have set aside a Multitude of Voices; which, from the Writings of our own and foreign Divines, are ready to pour their united Evidence. And lest the Business of Quotation, though sparingly managed, should seem dry and tedious; I will relieve your Weariness, and enliven the Collection, by an Extract from the Prince of English Poetry. — *Michael*, the prophetic Archangel, mentioning

Μη τινος φενηθης, ως τον κομον παραβαινας, επιδαν τη σην σφραγιδα; οτις γαρ αυτες παραβαινεις, ος δ αυτων εν Χρισμ ενισχυουσ; ως αν ωμεθους αυλα, και εναν επιληρσας, και πολλω αυτην η εκειναι; πολλω γαρ μεγαλη δυναστητη εναντις. Homil. XVII. in X ad Rom.

tioning the destructive Consequences of the Fall; and asserting the GODHEAD of that glorious PERSON, who undertook to be the Repairer of this deadly Breach; adds,

*Which HE, who comes thy SAVIOUR, shall re-cure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his Works,
In Thee and in Thy Seed. Nor can this be,
But by fulfilling (that which Thou didst want)
Obedience to the Law of GOD, impos'd
On Penalty of Death; and suffering Death,
The Penalty to thy Transgression due;
And due to theirs, which out of thine will grow.
SO ONLY can high Justice rest appeas'd*.*

The same celestial Teacher, speaking of the divine Law; explaining its Nature and Design; that it demonstrates, by inestimable Evidence, the very best of Men to be guilty of Sin and obnoxious to Wrath; displays likewise the great Remedy provided by the Gospel.

*————— That when they see
Law can discover Sin, but not remove,
(Save by those shadowy Expiations weak,
The Blood of Bulls and Goats) they may conclude,
Some Blood more precious must be paid for Man;
Just for Unjust; that, in such Righteousness,
To them by Faith imputed, they may find
Justification towards GOD, and Peace
Of Conscience †.*

Here

* MILTON, Book XII. 393.

† Book XII. 289.

Here then is the express Determination of our *Homilies*—supported by the Authority of our *Articles*—established by the Concurrence of our *Liturgy*—still farther ratified by the unanimous Attestation of several celebrated *Divines*; whose Lives were the brightest Ornament to our Church, and whose Writings are the most unexceptionable Interpretation of her Meaning.—As a Capital, to crown and complete this grand Column, supervenes the Declaration of the antient *Fathers*; those who flourished, and with the highest Renown, in the first and purest Ages of Christianity.—So that, if great Authorities carry any Weight; if illustrious Names challenge any Regard, this Tenet comes attended and dignified with very considerable *Credentials*.

Yet, I will venture to affirm, that all these, considerable as they appear, are the *least* of those Testimonials, which recommend the Doctrine to my *Theron's* Acceptance, and which have gained it Admittance into the Heart of

His most affectionate

ASPASIO.



L E T T E R IV.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

THE Family, in which I have the Satisfaction to reside, though remarkable for their genteel Figure and ample Fortune, are still more amiably distinguished by their *Benevolence, Hospitality, and Charity*.—As they live at a Distance from the Market-town, the Lady has converted one Apartment of her House into a little Dispensatory; and stocked it with some of the most common, the most needed, and most salutary Medicines. Which, in Cases of ordinary Indisposition, She distributes to her indigent Neighbours, with singular Compassion, and with no small Success.—This fine Morning, *Emilia* has ordered some skilful Hands into the Fields, to cull their healing Simples, and lay up a Magazine of Health for the afflicted Poor. *Camillus* is withdrawn, to receive his Rents, and settle Accounts with his Tenants.

Suppose, We act in Concert with these valuable Persons. Suppose, We range the delightful Fields of Scripture, and form a Collection, not of salutiferous Herbs, but of inestimable Texts; such as may be of sovereign Efficacy, to *assuage* the Anguish of a guilty Conscience, and impart *saving Health* to the distempered Soul.—Suppose, We open the Mines of
divine

divine Inspiration, and enrich Ourselves, not with the Gold of *Ophir*, but with the *unsearchable Treasures* of *CHRIST*; or with that perfect Righteousness of our REDEEMER, which is incomparably more precious, than the Revenues of a County, or the Produce of *Peru*.

In pleading for imputed Righteousness, We have already urged the Authority of our established Church, and the Suffrage of her most eminent Divines.—The Opinion of excellent Writers, which has been the Result of much Learning, great Attention, and earnest Prayer, is no contemptible Evidence. Yet We must always reserve the *casting* Voice, for those infallible Umpires, the Prophets and Apostles. *If we receive, with a deferential Regard, the Witness of Men; the Witness of GOD is greater **, and challenges the most implicit Submission.—Which Remark naturally leads me to the intended Subject of this Epistle; or rather calls upon me to fulfil my late Engagement, and shew—That the above-mentioned Doctrine is copiously revealed, through the whole Process of the Scriptures.

Let me select a very significant Portion from the Epistle to the *Romans*; which, though little inferior to a decisive Proof, is presented only as an Introduction to others. *Now the Righteousness of GOD without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even the Righteousness of GOD, which is by Faith of JESUS CHRIST unto all, and upon all them that believe †. The Righteousness of GOD, signifies that Righteousness, which the incarnate GOD wrought out in his own all-glorious Person.*

* 1 John v. 9.

† Rom. iii. 21, 22.

Person. It is styled the Righteousness of GOD, by way of superlative Pre-eminence; in Opposition to any Righteousness of our own, and in Contradistinction to the Righteousness of all Creatures whatever. This Righteousness is *without the Law*. Its Efficacy has no Dependence on, its Merit receives no Addition from, any Conformity of our Practice to the divine Law: being complete, absolutely complete in itself, and altogether sufficient to procure the Reconciliation and Acceptance of Sinners. This Righteousness is *manifested*† by the Gospel; and made as clear, as an Object which We behold with our own Eyes. It was *witnessed*† by the Law and the Prophets; and made as certain, as a Fact which is attested by unquestionable Evidence.—To produce this Evidency, to examine its Pertinency, and weigh its Sufficiency, is our present pleading Business.

We
This Explication, or something to the same Purpose, has occurred already. But it is hoped, the candid Reader will not condemn the Repetition, as a *disagreeable* or *jeune* Tautology.—Because, it is so consonant to the Practice of our great Apostle, who repeats the Term, re-inculcates the Doctrine, and hardly knows how to desert from the favourite Topic: like One, who was quite enamoured with the Subject; who found Music in the Words; and whose Happiness was bound up in the Blessing.—Because, it is conformable to another, and a greater Example. The LORD JEHOVAH Himself, within the Compass of *one* Chapter, once and again, yea, a third and a fourth Time, styles this wonderful Obedience, My Righteousness. As though the GOD of infinite Perfection, *gloried* in it; thought Himself most eminently magnified by it; and was jealous to have all the Honour resulting from it. See *Isai. li.*

† Πιστὸς ἡ δικαιοσύνη.

† Μαρτυρούμενη.

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We may begin with that gracious Declaration, made to the first Transgressors: *The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head* *; shall destroy the Works of the Devil, and retrieve whatever was lost by his malicious Artifices †. How could this be effected, but by restoring that Righteousness, which, for a while, our first Parents possessed; which they ought always to have held fast; but from which they so soon and so unhappily swerved?—Take the Position in the right Sense, and *Christianity is*, if not entirely, yet very nearly *as old as the Creation*. It was comprehended in this blessed Promise, as the *Stamina* of the largest Plants are contained in the Substance of their respective Seeds. Every subsequent Revelation being no more, than a *gradual Evolution* of this grand evangelical Principle; acting like the vegetative Powers of Nature, which, in rearing an Oak with all its Spread of Branches, only expand the *Tunicles*, and fill up the *Vessels* of the Acorn.

The Doctrine seems to have been typically taught, by the remarkable Manner of *clothing* our first Parents. —All they could do for their own Recovery, was like the patched and beggarly Mantle of *Fig-leaves*. This they relinquish, and GOD Himself furnishes them with Apparel †. Animals are slain, not for Food but *Sacrifice*; and the naked Criminals are arrayed with the Skins of those slaughtered Beasts. The Victims figured the *Expiation* of *CHRIST's* Death; VOL. II. A a the

• Gen. iii. 15.

† In some such Sense, I think, our first Parents must understand the Promise. Otherwise it could yield them no *effectual* Relief, under the distressing Sense of their own Misery, and the dismal Apprehension of their Posterity's Ruin.

† Gen. iii. 21.

the Clothing typified the *Imputation* of his Righteousness.—In perfect Conformity, perhaps with a Reference, to the Passage thus interpreted, the Apostle just now expressed Himself; *even the Righteousness of GOD, which is not only made over * to all Believers, as a rich Portion; but put * upon all, as a beautiful Garment.* Whereby alone their moral Deformity can be covered, and their everlasting Confusion prevented.—*Milton*, it is certain, speaking of this memorable Transaction, considers it in the same spiritual Sense :

*Nor HE their outward only with the Skins
Of Beasts, but inward Nakedness † (much more
Opprobrious !) with his Robe of Righteousness
Arraying, cover'd from his FATHER's Sight.*

In thy Seed, says the great JEHOVAH to his Servant *Abraham*, *shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed †.* That the Seed here mentioned is *CHRIST*, the Apostle || places beyond all Doubt.

Both

* * *Rom. iii. 22.* ΕΙΣ πάντας, ΕΝΙ πάντας, με, εν, πάντας.

† An Allusion to *Gen. iii. 10.* Where *Adam* confesses before JEHOVAH; *I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked.* Which must denote, what *Milton* truly styles, an *inward Nakedness*, or the Loss of Righteousness. Since nothing external, no Want of bodily Ornament, could have exposed our first Parent to the Wrath of GOD, or need have made Him afraid of it.

† *Gen. xxii. 18.*

|| See *St. Paul's* Comment upon this invaluable Promise, *Gal. iii. 8, &c.* This Commentator, We all allow, was guided by the SPIRIT, and knew the Mind of GOD. According to his Exposition of the Text, it is pregnant with the Doctrine of Justification by Faith, and contains an Abridgment of the Gospel.

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Both Scripture and Reason declare, That *true Blessedness* must necessarily include—the Pardon of Sins, and the Favour of GOD—the Sanctification of our Souls, and the Inheritance of Life eternal. None of which are to be acquired by any human Performances; but all are to be sought, and all may be found, in the Root and Offspring of *Abraham, JESUS CHRIST*. Who is therefore most pertinently styled, **THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS** *: The *actual* Desire of every enlightened Nation; and the *implicit* Desire of all Nations whatever. Because all, without any Exception, covet, what is to be derived only from *JESUS CHRIST* the Righteous, *real* Happiness.

The patriarchal Age, and the legal Oeconomy, bore their Testimony to this Truth, by typical Persons, emblematical Miracles, and figurative Usages. Indeed, the whole ceremonial Service was a grand Series of Types, representing *CHRIST* and his everlasting Righteousness †. In all which, this was the *unanimous* though silent Language; *Behold the LAMB of GOD, that taketh away the Sin of the World.*—These I shall not stay to discuss; because Proofs, more explicit and positive, wait for our Consideration. Only I would just make a transient Observation, relating to one very remarkable Constitution of the *Jewish* Ritual.

The High-priest had, on the Front of his Mitre, a Plate of pure Gold, engraven with that venerable Motto ‡, **HOLINESS TO THE LORD**. Which

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• Hag. ii. 7.

† *Totum Moysi Ministerium eo comparatum est, ut ad Messiam, illiusque Justitiam, Fide apprehendendam, veluti manu ducat.* WITS. Miscell.

‡ Exod. xxviii. 36, 37.

was always to be on his Forehead, when He performed the solemn Ministrations of the Sanctuary; and for this important Reason, that the People *might be accepted before the LORD* *. Did not this most clearly foreshew the immaculate Holiness of our great HIGH-PRIEST? And with equal Clearness imply, that his Holiness should procure Acceptance for all his Followers?

In the Book of *Job*, We have several Hints of this Truth, and one Passage very express to our Purpose. — *Elihu* describes an unconverted Person, under the chastising Hand of Providence. *Whose Life*, through the Extremity of his Disease, *draws near to the Graves* and his Soul, through the Multitude of his Iniquities, is ready to become a Prey to the Destroyers. In this deplorable Condition, *if there be present with Him, the MESSENGER* † of the Covenant of Peace; *that great INTERPRETER* † of the divine Counsels, who, for his super-excellent Wisdom, is justly acknowledged to be *One among a thousand*, or rather the chiefest among ten thousand. If He, by his enlightening SPIRIT, vouchsafe to *shew unto the afflicted Man his own perfect Righteousness*; that

* Exod. xxviii. 38.

† See *Job xxxiii. 22*, &c. — *CHRIST* is called *The Angel of the divine Presence*, *Isai. lxiii. 9*. *The Messenger of the Covenant*, *Mal. iii. 1*. — He is also, in the most unlimited Sense of the Phrase, *The Interpreter of the divine Counsels*: He, to whom the FATHER hath given the Tongue of the Learned, and by whom He makes known the otherwise unsearchable Mysteries of the Gospel. — Should any Doubt remain, concerning the Propriety of applying this Passage to our LORD *JESUS CHRIST*, the Reader, I hope, will give himself the Pleasure of perusing the polite *WITSIUS*, *Opera*. Lib. IV. Cap. iii. § xxxi. and Dr. *GREY*'s valuable Notes upon the Place, in his *Liber Jobi*.

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that most meritorious *Uprightness*, on which alone a Sinner may depend, both for temporal and eternal Salvation. *Then* the poor distressed Creature, attentive to this Instruction, and applying to this Righteousness, is made Partaker of Pardon. **GOD**, the sovereign **LORD** of Life and Death, is *gracious unto Him*; and *saith*, in the Greatness of his Strength, as well as in the Multitude of his Mercies, *Deliver Him from going down into the Pit of Corruption*, as a Pledge of his Deliverance from the Pit of Perdition. For, *I have found a Ransom*, sufficient to satisfy my Justice. I have received an Atonement, in behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled Transgressor.

But why do I insist upon *one* particular Paragraph? It seems to be the main Design of the *whole* Book, to overthrow all Pretensions of any justifying Righteousness in Man. That the wretched Sinner, nay, that the greatest Saint, stripped of every personal Plea, may see nothing to rely on, but the Merits of a REDEEMER. This is the final Issue of all those warm Debates, which pass between the afflicted Hero and his censorious Friends. This is the grand Result of *Elihu's* calm Reasoning, and of **GOD** Almighty's awful Interrogatories. The apparent *Center* this *, in which all the Lines terminate; justly therefore to be considered, as the principal Scope of the whole Work.

I must not omit an excellent Observation, which I find in some critical and explanatory Notes †, on the last Words of *David*. The judicious Author proving, that this Song relates to **CHRIST**; that it

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displays

* See Job xlii. 6.
† See xxiii. 3, &c.

† By Dr. GRIFF. See

displays the Dignity of our REDEEMER, under the Character of *The KING*, and *The JUST ONE*; adds, as an Explication of the last amiable and glorious Title—“Our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is so called, not so much for having
“fulfilled all Righteousness, in his own Person, and
“performed an unfinning Obedience to the Will
“of *GOD*, as because by his Righteousness im-
“puted to Us, We also upon the Terms * of the
“Gospel, are justified, or accounted righteous
“before *GOD*.”

I think We may evidently discern the same Vein of evangelical Doctrine, running through many of the *Psalms*—*He shall convert † my Soul*; turn me, not only

* *Upon the Terms of the Gospel*—That is, *freely*; or, as the Prophet speaks, *without Money and without Price*. For nothing is requisite, in order to a Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits, but a Grant from *GOD*. This Grant the Gospel exhibits, proclaims, and tenders to all. All, without making any Distinction, or requiring any Qualification. That Salvation may be, *not of Works, but of Grace*.—This Point, which is so intimately connected with our Comfort and Hope, the Reader may see more fully stated in *Dialogue XV*.

† *Psal. xxiii. 3*. I am sensible the Word שׁוּב may signify to *refresh* or *restore*; may answer to the Greek Phrase ἀναπαύω; and denote the Comforts of the *HOLY GHOST*.—This Verb may also bear the same Signification with the Participle επιστρέφας, as it is used by our *LORD*, in his Exhortation to *Peter*, *When Thou art converted*. Not describing the first grand Revolution in the Heart; by which a new Determination is given to the Judgment, and a new Bias to the Affections. But expressing those subsequent Operations of the Divine *SPIRIT*; by which We are recovered from our various Relapses, and healed of our daily Infirmities. And I question, whether there is any Instance of Backsliding, in which We more frequently need those restoring Aids, than

only from Sin and Ignorance, but from every false Confidence, and every deceitful Refuge. *He shall bring me forth in Paths of Righteousness*, in those Paths of imputed Righteousness, which are always adorned with the Trees of Holiness; are always watered with the Fountains of Consolation; and always terminate in everlasting Rest.—Some, perhaps, may ask, Why I give this Sense of the Passage? Why may it not signify the Paths of Duty, and the Way of *our own* Obedience?—Because, such Effects are here mentioned, as never have resulted, and never can result, from any Duties of our own. These, detached from our SAVIOUR's Righteousness, are not *green Pastures*, but a parched and blasted Heath: are not *still Waters*, but a troubled and disorderly *

Stream.

than in the Case of adhering to our REDEEMER's Righteousness. So prone are We to *forget our Resting-place!* So liable to fall from our Stedfastness in *CHRIST!*

* *Blasted, disorderly*—Let not these Words grate on the Ear; or, if they grate on the Ear, let them humble the Heart. What were *Job's* Duties? Zealous and exemplary; practised from his very Youth; and neither excelled, nor equalled by any Person then on the Earth. Yet these, in Point of Justification, were not a whit better than *Aspasio* represents. Let Us hear the last Words of this matchless Saint, *I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Asbes.* From this Confession we learn, that, with all his Furniture of *personal* Obedience, He had just enough to be ashamed, confounded, undone.

After all; if the Reader, dissatisfied with *Aspasio's* Interpretation, should prefer the following Exposition, it is very much at his Service.—*The LORD*, reconciled to a poor Sinner, by Means of free Justification, is become *my Shepherd*.—*Therefore, I shall not want*, whatever is truly good, either for my Body or my Soul, in Time or to Eternity.—*He maketh me*, not to pass through, but to *lie down*; to continue, abide, and rest in *green Pastures*;

Stream. Neither can these speak Peace, or administer Comfort, when We pass through the Valley and Shadow of Death. To yield these Blessings is the exalted Office of *CHRIST*, and the sole Prerogative of his Obedience.

Admitting, that this Obedience is of Voverign Advantage, during the Years of Life, and in the Hour of Death, it may still occur to the serious and inquisitive Mind, what will be our Safeguard, in the invisible State? When the Soul departs, and our Place on Earth knows Us no more, when the Body revives, and We shall all stand before the Judgment seat; what will then avail Us?—The same Righteousness of our Divine *LORD*. This, if I mistake not, is displayed in the very next Psalm. Which begins with a solicitous Enquiry; subjoins a satisfactory Answer; and closes with a most pertinent but rapturous Apostrophe.—This is the Enquiry; *Who shall ascend into the Hill of the LORD? Or, who shall rise up in his holy Place?*

—To which this is the Answer; *Even He that hath* *cham* *precious Blood of CHRIST* *amongst the Promises, Privileges, and Blessings of the Gospel; than which nothing can be more nourishing, and nothing more delightful, to the spiritual Man.—He leadeth me forth, to Activity and Duty, by the still Waters. With a Sense of my Interest in CHRIST and his inexhaustible Fulness, He refresheth my Spirit, and animates me to Obedience.—When, through the Infirmary of my Flesh, I fall and contract Guilt, He refresheth my Soul. He teacheth me to behold the bleeding Lamb of GOD; and to see all my Sins laid upon my SAVIOUR. This renews my Strength, and re-inspires my drooping Resolutions.—Thus He leadeth me on; enables me to persevere and advance, in the Path of Righteousness and true Holiness. Not for my Merit, but for his own Name's sake; not to recompense any Excellency in me, but to manifest the exceeding Riches of his own Grace.*

clean Hands and a pure Heart. He shall receive the Blessing of Remission and Reconciliation; and Righteousness, as the Cause of both, from the GOD of his Salvation. Even that perfect Righteousness, which is not acquired by Man, but bestowed by JEHOVAH: which is not performed by the Saint, but received by the Sinner: which is the only solid Basis, to support our Hopes of Happiness; and the only valid Plea, for an Admission into the Mansions of Joy. Then follows the Apostrophe. The Prophet foresees the Ascension of CHRIST and of his Saints. He sees his LORD, marching at the Head of the redeemed World, and conducting them unto the City of the living GOD. Suitably to such a View, and in a most beautiful Strain of Poetry, He addresses Himself to the heavenly Portals; Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting Doors; and the King of Glory, with all the Heirs of his Grace and Righteousness, shall

Psal. xxiv. 4. Who hath a pure Heart? He only, whose Heart is sprinkled from an evil Conscience, by the precious Blood of CHRIST. Who hath clean Hands? He only; who lives, and orders his whole Conversation, by Faith in the SON of GOD. Heb. x. 22. Gal. ii. 20.

What the Psalmist means, when He says, *The Blessing*, is explained by Himself, *Psal. xxxii. 1.* *Blessed is He, whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin is covered.* And it is well observed by a certain Writer, Righteousness being found only in JESUS CHRIST, the Substitute for the Guilty, to Him alone the Blessing is respect. The Blessing rests only on his Righteousness, and follows it wherever it goes. To whomsoever it extends, the Blessing is also conveyed.

The Words of the Apostle, *1 Cor. vi. 11.* *Ye have been washed by the Word of the Gospel, and are almost a literal Translation, are the very best Explanation, of the Psalmist's Language, 1 Psal. xxiv. 5.* Rom. v. 17.

shall make their triumphant Entry; shall enter in, and go out no more.

Having shewn the powerful and extensive Influence of our REDEEMER's Righteousness; its Efficacy, in this World to justify, in the other World to glorify; well may the sweet Singer of *Israel* profess his supreme Value for it, and entire Dependence on it. *I will go forth in the Strength of the LORD GOD, and will make mention of thy Righteousness only* *. As though He had said; I will have recourse to no other Righteousness, for the Consolation of my Soul. I will plead no other Righteousness, for the Recommendation of my Person. I will fly to no other Righteousness, for my final Acceptance, and endless Felicity.—This is that *Raiment of Needle-work and Clothing of wrought Gold* †, in which the Church, the Queen-Consort, is presented to her immortal Bridegroom; with which She enters the everlasting Habitations, to be “for ever with the “LORD.”—This is that Garment *for Glory and for Beauty* ‡, which clothed our great HIGH-PRIEST; and, descending to his very Feet ||, clothes and adorns the lowest Members of his mystical Body.

Recollecting all the foregoing Particulars, justly and on the most rational Ground, does our royal

Author

* *Psal. lxxi. 16.* There is, in the *Hebrew* Original, and in the new Translation, a very emphatical Repetition; which adds Weight to the Sentiment, and demands a peculiar Attention from the Reader: *Thy Righteousness, even thine only.*

† *Psal. xlv. 13.*
‡ *Exod. xxviii. 31.* *Notabat*, says WITSIUS upon the Place, *illud Pallium Justitiæ, quo indutus est, & suis induit CHRISTUS.*

|| *Rev. i. 13.*

Author declare; *Blessed are the People, that know the joyful Sound: they shall walk, O LORD, in the Light of thy Countenance. In thy Name shall they rejoice all the Day: and in thy Righteousness shall they be exalted* *.—They are truly blessed, they alone are happy, who know the joyful Sound of the Gospel; not only receive it with their Ears, but admit it into their very Hearts; so as to partake of the sacred Peace, and spiritual Liberty, which it proclaims.—*They shall walk in the Light of thy Countenance*; they shall enjoy such Communications of thy Grace, and such Manifestations of thy Love, as will constitute the Serenity and Sunshine of their Souls.—*In thy Name, O LORD JESUS CHRIST, in thy matchless Person, and thy infinite Merits, shall they rejoice* †. And not occasionally, but habitually;

* Psal. lxxxix. 15, 16.

† Some Readers, perhaps, may think this Interpretation of the Word *Righteousness*, not strictly proper; and the Proof which *Aspasio* draws from such Passages of Scripture, not sufficiently conclusive.—For their Satisfaction and my own, I would ask; What other Interpretation, consistent with the Tenour of the Gospel, can be put upon the Word? Can it mean GOD's *Justice*, which giveth to All according to their Deserts? In this View, *David* could have little Cause to rejoice in it, but abundant Reason to be terrified at it.—Does it signify GOD's *Faithfulness* in performing his Promises? What are all his Promises, but Expressions of Good-will in *CHRIST*; founded on the Merits and Righteousness of *CHRIST*; or, as the Apostle speaks, *yea and amen*, both made and confirmed, in *CHRIST JESUS*?—Does it denote the *Mercy* and *Benignity* of GOD, justifying, regenerating, saving Sinners? This Sense, and indeed every comfortable Sense, either immediately refers to, or ultimately terminates in, *CHRIST* and his Grace; *CHRIST* and his Righteousness. For, in every Thing

bitually; not barely at some distinguished Intervals, but *all the Day*. Their Joy shall be as lasting, as it is substantial.—Though abased, though confounded in themselves, *in thy Righteousness shall they be exalted*; now exalted to a State of holy Friendship and delightful Communion with GOD; and exalted, when Time shall be no more, to a State of celestial Glory, and eternal Bliss.

How thoroughly *evangelical* is this seraphic Writer! He has Joy, He has Blessedness, and He looks for everlasting Exaltation. Yet not from his Faith, his Repentance, and his own sincere Obedience. According to this, which is the modern Scheme, Faith, instead of receiving, would *supplant* the LORD JESUS: Repentance, instead of being the Gift of CHRIST, would become his Rival: and sincere Obedience, which is for the Praise and Glory of GOD, would *eclipse* and *impoverish* his Grace.—But *David* adopts no such Sentiments. *David* maintains no such Doctrine. This is the invariable Language of his Heart; this the Burden of his Song; *All my Springs of Hope, of Trust, and Consolation, O thou adored IMMANUEL, are in Thee* *.

This Sense is the less precarious, I had almost said the more certain, as it exactly corresponds with the Analogy of Faith, and coincides with the express Declarations of other Scriptures.—*Isaiah* is styled the *Evangelist* of the Jewish Church, because, more frequently than any of the Prophets, he has delivered the most important Doctrine, and We shall have the most forcible Thing consolatory, CHRIST is ALLELUIA. And if this be true, *Asaph's* Doctrine cannot be false, nor his Exposition wrong.

Psal. lxxxviii.

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he celebrates, and more copiously explains, this and other Peculiarities of the Gospel.—In the very first Chapter, He preaches these glad Tidings: *Sion shall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness.* Sion, the Gospel Church, composed of fallen Creatures, sometime disobedient to their GOD, and enslaved to Satan, shall be *redeemed*. Redeemed, not with corruptible Things, Silver and Gold, but by severe *judgments* executed on their glorious HEAD, and gracious REPRESENTATIVE. And not by these only, but by *Righteousness* also; by the perfect and most meritorious Obedience of the same divinely excellent PERSON*.

Our sacred Author bears his Testimony with warmer Zeal and brighter Evidence, as he proceeds in his incomparable Discourses. *Surely, shall one say (or, as it may be rendered, only) in the LORD have I Righteousness and Strength* †. Please to observe,

Hanc Redemptionem docet SPIRITUS SANCTUS habere Nos in Obedientia & Sanguine JESU CHRISTI. Isai. i. 27. VITRING. in Loc.

† *Isai. xlv. 24.* In the LORD have I Righteousness and Strength. I think, We have clouded the Beauty, and weakened the Energy of this Clause, by detaching it from the preceding Sentence. This Clause should make a Part of IMMANUEL's august Speech. It prescribes the Form of that religious Swearing, or of that solemn Confession, which is required from every human Creature, who desires to inherit Salvation. Let Us read it in this Connection, and We shall have the most important Doctrine, that ever was delivered; expressed in the most forcible Manner, that can be conceived.

I have sworn by Myself, and all my immortal Perfections. The Word is gone out of my Mouth in Truth, in Wisdom, and consummate Equity; and shall not return,

Theron. It is not said, in my own Works, in my own Repentance, no, nor in my own Faith, but *in the LORD*, in the incarnate JEHOVAH, have I Righteousness.—Righteousness for Justification, and Strength for Sanctification. An imputed Righteousness, to procure my Acceptance; an imparted Strength, to produce my Holiness. The first, constituting my Title to the everlasting Inheritance; the last, forming my personal Preparation for its Enjoyment.—*Surely*, which expresses a firm Persuasion, and an unshaken Affiance. *Only*, which denotes an utter Renunciation of all other Confidence, and excludes every other Ground of Hope.—*Righteousnesses* *, the Original is in the plural Number. Which seems to be used, not without an important Design; to enlarge the Significancy of the Word, and make it correspond with the Richness of the Blessing. So that it may imply the Fulness and supereminent Excellency of this

either to be repealed, or to be altered.—Who can hear such an Exordium, from such a Speaker, and not be awed into the deepest Reverence? LORD, We are all Attention. What Thou pronouncest, with such unparalleled Solemnity, We would receive into our very Hearts. It shall be the ruling Principle of our Faith and Life.—Is such our Resolution? This then is the Decree, this the Oath of JEHOVAH; *To ME every Knee shall bow: to ME every Tongue shall swear*, (אמר) saying, **SURELY IN THE LORD HAVE I RIGHTEOUSNESS AND STRENGTH.**—Talke We of Confession of Faith? Here We have a Confession of Faith, drawn up by Omniscience, and enjoined by Omnipotence.

* אמת parallel to which, both in Construction and Signification, is the Phrase used by St. *Jahn*, *Ανασπασα*, Rev. xix. 8. *The fine Linen is the Righteousness* (properly the Righteousnesses) *of the Saints.*

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this Gift of Grace; as comprehending whatever *, either of Suffering or of Obedience, is requisite to the Justification of Sinners.

Therefore the Prophet adds; *In the LORD, shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory* †. Most important and most precious Text! Every Expression is big with Truth, and bright with Grace.—*All the Seed*: intimating, that the Way of Salvation, in every Age of the World, and to all the People of GOD, is invariable and one.—What is this invariable Way? It is to be pardoned, and delivered from Wrath; to be approved, and admitted into Favour; or, as the inspired Penman expresses it, to be *justified*.—How is this effected? Not by our upright Aims, not by our sincere Endeavours, but by *having* a real and proper *Righteousness*.—Where is this to be had? Not in Ourselves; not in any Accomplishments, or any Performances of our own; but *in the LORD REDEEMER*, and his consummately righteous Nature, Affections, Actions.—Are these sufficient for the Purpose? So sufficient, that We may not only confide, but *glory* in them. They afford Cause, not only for the Stedfastness of Reliance, but for the Elevations of Triumph. Cleaving to these, We may look Sin and Satan, look Death and Hell in the Face; and say, with a noble Defiance, *Who shall condemn Us?*

What

* *Vult dicere Propheta, in JEHOVAH esse id propter quod Peccator respiciens & credens, a Peccatis absolvi, & jure ad Benedictionem cœlestem donari queat ac debeat: esse illud JEHOVÆ proprium; ab ipso querendum; quod extra ipsum non invenitur.* VITRING.

† Isai. xlv. 25.

What he had just now asserted, he exemplifies in his own, and in the Person of every true Believer. *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my Soul shall be joyful in my GOD; for He hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation, He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness* *. True Believers are compared, in one of our sacred Eclogues, to a *Company of Horses in Pharoah's Chariot* †: to *Horses*, than which no Animal is more stately and graceful: to *Egyptian Horses*, which were the best and completest, then in the *World*: to those in *Pharoah's Chariot*, which, doubtless, were a choice Set; selected from *Thousands*; and finest, where all were fine. Here, methinks, I see the Comparison realized. *Christians*, endued with such a Spirit, as breathes in this animated Text, are like a Collection of gallant and majestic Steeds; not destined to low Drudgery, but appointed to run in the royal Chariot; all Life; full of Fire; champing the Bit, and eager for the Chase. Nothing can more beautifully describe a State of Exultation and Ardour, than the preceding Similitude, or the following Words—*I will rejoice; I will greatly rejoice; my very Soul, and all that is within me, shall be joyful in my GOD*. Wherefore? Because He *has clothed me*, undone Sinner as I am, *with the Garments of Salvation*: because He *hath covered me*, defective as all my Services are, *with the Robe of Righteousness* †. A Robe, which hides every Corruption, and covers every Sin: so that neither
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* Isai. lxi. 10.

† Cant. i. 9.

† *Id quod Peccatorem nudum tegit coram DEO, est sanctissima & pretiosa Justitia sive Obedientia CHRISTI JESU. Hoc Veste DEUS Populum suum Induit, tam quod eam Credentibus ex Gratiâ imputat; tum quod eos Fide donat, per quam eandem ad se applicant.* VITRING.

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Vol. I

Stain nor Deformity appear in my Character. A Robe, which adorns and dignifies my Soul; renders it fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun *, and meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light.

Having represented this Righteousness, in a Variety of grand and charming Views—the Prophet farther characterizes it, as the *unalterable* and *never-failing* Origin of our Justification and Happiness. This he displays by a Train of Images, bold and sublime to the last Degree. *Lift up your Eyes to the Heavens, and look upon the Earth beneath: for the Heavens shall vanish away like Smoke, and the Earth shall wax old like a Garment; but my Salvation shall be for ever, and my Righteousness shall not be abolished †.*

—Observe the vast Dimensions, and the firm Foundations, both of the upper and the lower World. How strong, how steadfast, they all appear! Yet these, indissoluble as they may seem, shall perish.

—This majestic Globe, on which Summers shine and flowery Prospects smile, shall lose its beautiful Gloss; and soon be laid aside, like a decayed useless Garment. Even that more majestic Concave, in which Stars glitter, and Comets glow, shall be deprived of its very superior Splendour; and vanish away, like the unsubstantial dissolving Smoke.

Whereas, *my Salvation*, together with the inestimable Blessings comprehended in it, shall subsist, shall flourish *for ever*. And *my Righteousness*, which is the meritorious Cause of all, shall not be abolished; but remain an immoveable Basis and an inviolable Sanctuary, for the Repose and Safety of Sinners. —In short, whether there be moral Virtues, they shall be found wanting; whether there be christian

VOL. II.

B b

Graces,

* Cant. vi. 10.

† Isai. li. 6.

Graces, they shall prove ineffectual; but my Conformity to the Law, and my Obedience unto Death, neither need Addition, nor admit of Alteration. They are *all-sufficient* in their Merit, and in their Agency *everlasting*.

When *Day* arises on our benighted Hemisphere, it breaks and spreads by a gradual Increase. Forming, first, the grey Twilight; next, the blushing Morn; then, the shining Light; till all is heightened into the Blaze and Glow of Noon.—When *Spring* revisits our wintry Clime, She also advances by gentle Degrees. First, swells the Bud, and protrudes the Gem. Then, expands the Leaf, and unfolds the Blossom. The Face of Things is continually changing for the better; till, at Length, all the Country is covered with Bloom and Verdure.—This leisurely Process, renders the *strong* Effulgence of the celestial Orb, more supportable; and the *lovely* Expansions of the vegetable Creation, more observable.

So progressive and increasing are the Displays of *JESUS CHRIST*, exhibited in the Scriptures. Whose Appearance is unspeakably *more delightful* to the Soul, than the Emanations of orient Light are to the Eye, or the Entertainments of the vernal Season to our other Senses.—The Gloom of fallen *Adam* was alleviated by a Ray from this SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.—*Abraham* and the Patriarchs saw afar off the Blessed *JESUS*, as the Morning spread upon the Mountains*.—The *Psalmist* and the Prophets, beheld his nearer Approaches, like the Sun upon the Point of Rising.—To the Apostles and Evangelists He arose, in perfect

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* Joel ii. 2.

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Lustre, and complete Beauty. The Grace and the Privileges, which *dawned* under other Dispensations, are *brought* even to meridian *Light* by the Gospel. —This I mention, just to intimate, what You may expect from a following Letter.

In the mean Time, let Us attend to the Prophet *Daniel*. He records a Message from Heaven, which is more clearly descriptive of this great evangelical Blessing, than all the foregoing Texts.—He had been under much Distress, and in great Perplexity: afflicted for his own, and his Countrymens Sins; anxious for the Welfare of the chosen Nation, and the Prosperity of true Religion. When an Angel was dispatched to the holy Mourner, with this most chearing News; which, received by Faith, is the richest Balm to a wounded Conscience, and the only Remedy for a guilty World. *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City; to finish the Transgression, and make an End of Sin; to make Reconciliation for Iniquity; and to bring in everlasting Righteousness* *.—This Prophecy, without all Contradiction, relates to the MESSIAH. It foretels, that, in the Fulness of Time, He should *finish the Transgression* †; restrain and suppress the Power of Corruption, by purifying to Himself a peculiar People. — Should *make an End of Sin* ‡; by sealing up or secreting its Guilt, and totally abolishing its condemning Power—Should *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*; by sustaining the Vengeance due to Sinners, and fully satisfying the divine Justice for all their Offences.

But, as to suffer Punishment, is one Thing; and to obey the Precept, is another: as Pardon of Sin,

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does

* Dan. ix. 24.

† כלל

‡ סתם

does by no Means complete the Privilege of Justification: it is added, that the MESSIAH should also *bring in an everlasting Righteousness*—A Righteousness, or an adequate and perfect Conformity to all the Dictates of the Law. Which consists, in an habitual Holiness of Nature, and an actual Obedience of Life—This He should not barely publish, but accomplish and *bring in* *. That it may be presented both to GOD and Man; to GOD, for the Reparation of his violated Law; to Man, for the Justification of his obnoxious Person—That this Righteousness should be *everlasting*; not such as may be compared to the Morning Cloud, which soon passeth away; or to the early Dew, which is soon dried up; but such as will out-last the Hills, on which the latter shines; and out-last the Skies, through which the former fails. A Righteousness, whose Merits extend to every Period and every Action of our Lives; and when once made ours by Imputation, remains and will remain our unalienable Property.—To this all the Saints, who, in antient Generations, pleased GOD, owe their Acceptance; on this, all the Children of Men, who, in future Ages, hope for his Favour, must rely; by this the whole Assembly of the Blessed, will be invariably and eternally precious in his Sight.—Exalted Character! Can it be applicable to any Thing less,

* לְהַבִּיחַ I think, must signify more than to *publish* or *preach*. Had this been all that the Angel was commissioned to declare, לְבַשֵּׁר or לְהַבִּיחַ would probably have been used.—The Word implies such a *bringing in* (the Original is the same) as when *Abel* brought his Sacrifice to the Altar, for the divine Acceptance; and *Esau* brought his Venison into the Chamber, for his Father's Use. Gen. iv. 4. xxvii. 31.

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less, than the Righteousness of the incarnate GOD? Surely, None can imagine, that *Daniel* would speak in such a magnificent Strain of any *human* Righteousness; since, in this very Chapter, he professedly depreciates Himself, his Fellow-saints, and all human Performances whatever *.

I forgot, in the proper Place, to consult the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Let Us now refer Ourselves to his Determination. Celebrating the SAVIOUR of *Judah* and *Israel*, He says; *This is his Name, whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*. A Determination, so clear and satisfactory, as not to leave, One would almost conclude, any Room for Appeal.—Should the Sense of the Passage be questioned, I think, there cannot be a more authentic Explication, than the preceding Extracts from *Isaiah* and *Daniel*. Having the unanimous Attestation of two inspired Penmen, We may venture to abide by such Authority, even in Opposition to some respectable Names.—In the Verse immediately foregoing, the *essential* Holiness of the REDEEMER is displayed, under the Character of the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH.—The Sanctity, which He will impart to his Subjects, is intimated by his *executing Judgment and Justice in the Earth*.—In the Clause, We have quoted, his *imputed* Righteousness is foretold and promised.—Thus, the several Sentences are distinct; the Description of the SAVIOUR is complete; and He appears perfectly suited to the Exigencies of a wretched World. A World, in its worst Estate, enslaved to Satan; and in its best, falling short of the

B b 3

* O LORD, Righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto Us Confusion of Faces. Ver. 7.

the Glory of GOD.—This, therefore, I take to be the grand and extensive Meaning of the Prophet; not barely, The righteous LORD; not barely, The LORD who infuses Righteousness into sinful Souls; but the incarnate JEHOVAH*, whose *mediatorial* Righteousness is, by an Act of gracious Imputation, *ours*—to all the Intents of Justification and Salvation, *ours*—as much *ours* for these blessed Purposes, as if We had wrought it out, each in his own Person †.

Foreseeing and contemplating these Blessings, the enraptured *Zechariah* cries out; *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Sion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto Thee: He is just, and having Salvation, lowly and riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Ass* ‡. — He addresses himself to *Sion* and *Jerusalem*, to the ecclesiastical and civil Community. People of all Ranks and of every Character, are exhorted to *rejoice*; to
rejoice

* *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. In these golden, infinitely better than golden Verses, are characterized the divine and the human Natures of CHRIST, together with his mediatorial Office. The *divine* Nature; in that He enjoys the Honours of the GODHEAD, and possesses the incommunicable Name JEHOVAH.—The *human* Nature; in that He was to be *raised up unto David*, and spring as a Branch from his Root.—The *mediatorial* Office; in that He is the *Righteousness* of his People, and the *Salvation* of Sinners.

† WITSIUS, speaking of the *mediatorial* Righteousness, has written in *Latin*, what *Aspasio* expresses in *English*; *Per illam Obedientiam tota Multitudo illorum, qui ad Ipsum pertinent, iusti constituuntur; id est, censentur Jus habere ad æternam Vitam, non minus quam si quilibet eorum in propria Persona illam Obedientiam præstitisset.* Lib. II. cap. v.

‡ *Zech.* ix. 9.

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rejoice *greatly*; nay, to exprefs the Joy of their Heart, by loud *Hallelujahs*, and triumphant *Exclamations*.—What is the Cause of this general Delight? What can fill both Church and State with fuch high Satisfaction? *Thy King cometh unto Thee*; even that glorious KING, who rules in Heaven, and rules in the Heart; whose Service is Freedom, and whose Laws are Love. He comes, to be made Flefh, and to dwell in thy Nature.—*He is juft*; divinely righteous in his Perfon; confummately righteous in his Life; and fulfils all Righteoufnefs in thy Stead.—*Having Salvation*; not fetting Thee to procure it, but procuring it for Thee. Bringing with Him a great, a complete, an eternal Salvation; fully prepared, in all Points finifhed, and free for thy Acceptance.—That none may be difcouraged, and none deterred, from applying to this PRINCE of Peace, He is, amidft all the Honours of his Sovereignty, *lowly*: does not abhor the Bafeft, will not defpife the Meanef: to the Poor and Worthlefs his Gospel is preached, for the Guilty and Abominable his Benefits are intended.—As an Emblem, as a Proof, of this moft amiable and condefcending Goodnefs, *He will ride*; not like the Conquerors of the Nations, in a fplendid triumphal Chariot, or on a richly caparifoned Steed; but upon the moft mean and defpicable of all Animals, *an Afs*: nay, what is ftill more defpicable, on a rude undifciplined *Colt*, *the wayward Foal of an Afs* *.

And

* Because fome profane Scoffers have prefumed to ridicule this very remarkable Incident of our LORD's Life, fome Interpreters of Note have endeavoured to refcue it from their *abufive* Attempts, by obferving—“That

And now—since my *Theron* confesses Himself to be *miserable, and poor, and naked*: since the Eyes of his

“ the *Eastern* Asses are much larger and more graceful
 “ than ours. That Patriarchs and Judges thought it no
 “ Disgrace to ride upon them.”

This Observation has, I fear, more of *false Delicacy*, than of real Truth, or Christian Simplicity. In the *Patriarchal* Ages, I acknowledge, Persons of high Distinction thought it no Dishonour, to appear on this Animal. But I very much question, whether the same Fashion subsisted, or the same Way of Thinking prevailed, in the Reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*. The Apostle mentions, not Asses, but Horses, as the usual Means of Conveyance. See *Jam. iii. 3*.—Nay, I am strongly inclined to suspect, that the plain primitive Custom was superseded, even in the Days of *Zechariah*. For, long before this Time I find, that *Solomon had four thousand Stalls of Horses for his Chariots, and twelve thousand Horsemen*; and that *Horses were brought to Him out of Egypt, and divers other Countries*, 1 Kings iv. 26. x. 28, 29. From this Period, it is probable, none but the poor and inferior Sort of People rode upon Asses.—When *Isaiah* prophesied, *The Land was full of Horses*, *Isai. ii. 7*. Under the *Persian* Monarchy, when *Zechariah* flourished, Horses were in still greater Repute. Well therefore might the Prophet say, with Wonder and Delight—*lowly*; and, as a Demonstration thereof, *riding upon an Ass*! Whereas, if the Procession had been performed on a graceful Animal, and in a respectable Manner, how was this an Evidence of our REDEEMER's *Lowliness*.

They, who would *dignify* this Action, any otherwise than from its greatly to be admired Abasement, seem to have forgotten the Stable, the Manger, and the Cross.—They, who would *ennoble* this Animal, from any Consideration whatever, seem to mistake entirely the Design of the Prophet. He intends to exhibit a Picture, where Magnificence and Humiliation meet in their Extremes. A King, clothed with Righteousness, and dispensing Salvation; yet despised and rejected, by the Wise, the Mighty, the Proud. Supremely majestic and desirable, to the Eye of Faith; yet having no Form nor Comeliness,

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his Understanding are enlightened, to see the Impurity of his Heart, and the Imperfection of his Righteousness—what Advice, cheering and salutary, shall I suggest? O! let Him listen to an ADVISER, infinitely more able and compassionate. Listen to HIM, who is the ANTIENT OF DAYS, and the WISDOM OF GOD; *I counsel Thee*, says the Blessed JESUS, *to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that Thou mayest be rich; and white Raiment, that Thou mayest be clothed* *.—Gold! What can this denote, but all those spiritual Treasures, which are hid in CHRIST? Which are, in Measure, unsearchable; in Value, inestimable; in Duration, eternal.—*White Raiment*! Surely this must signify the Righteousness of our REDEEMER; which is all Purity, and all Perfection. Which clothes the Soul, as a most suitable and commodious Garment arrays the Body. Which will present the Believer, void of Shame, and free from Blemish; will present Him, with Confidence and Honour, before the Throne of the MAJESTY in the Heavens.

This,

ness, in the Eye of Sense. Higher, far higher than the Heavens, yet offering Himself and his Benefits to the Vulgar, the Sordid, the Vile.

Was it a mean Attitude? *Exceedingly* mean? Mean even to Contempt? I make no Scruple to grant it: nay, I make my Boast of it! It is for the Honour of my LORD's Condescension: it is for the utter Confusion of all worldly Pomp and Grandeur: and it is for the unspeakable Comfort of my sinful Soul.—Most charming Humility! Most endearing Gentleness! HE, *who rideth upon the Heavens as it were upon an Horse, and maketh the Clouds his Chariot*, to atone for my Pride, and to encourage my Hope, disdained not, in the Days of his Flesh, to ride upon an Ass.

* Rev. iii. 18.

This, to use the delicate Language, and amiable Images of *Isaiab*—*This Doctrine*, embraced by a realizing Faith, *is the only Pillow of Rest, where-with Ye may cause the weary and heavy-laden Soul to find Repose; and this is the sovereign Cordial*, prepared by infinite Mercy, for the *Refreshment* of anxious and desponding Transgressors. O! Let Us not be in the Number of those proud and refractory Creatures, who, though *they* infinitely needed, yet *would not hear* * the gracious News, nor receive the unspeakable Benefit.—In this Respect, and in this most eminently, is that other Saying of the same sublime Teacher, true; *The LORD of Hosts shall be for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of Beauty, to the Residue of his People* †. Shall we tear from our Temples, or reject with Disdain, this unfading and heavenly Ornament; in order to substitute a mean and tawdry Chaplet of our own?

Let me add a pertinent Passage from one of our celebrated dramatic Writers. Which, if proper in *his* Sense, will be incomparably more so, according to *our* Manner of Application.

*It were contemning,
With impious self-sufficient Arrogance,
This Bounty of our GOD, not to accept,
With every Mark of Honour, such a Gift.*

I might proceed to urge this Expostulation of the Poet, as I might easily have multiplied my Quotations from holy Writ. But, studious of Brevity, I resign both, without farther Enlargement, to your own Meditation. Yet, more studious of my Friend's
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* *Ifai.* xxviii. 12.

† *Ifai.* xxviii. 5.

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Let. 4. ASPASIO to THERON. 395

Happinefs, I cannot conclude without wifhing Him an Interelt, a clear and eftablifhed Interelt, in this everlafting Righteoufnefs of *CHRIST*. For fo, and fo only, can He have *everlafting Consolation and good Hope through Grace*.—I am, my dear *Theron*,

Inviolably Yours,

ASPASIO.

P. S. Oppofite to the Room in which I write, is a moft agreeable Profpelt of the Gardens and the Fields. *Thefe*, covered with Herbage, and loaded with Corn: *thofe* adorned with Flowers, and abounding with Efculents. All appearing, with fo florid and fo beautiful an Afpect, that they really feem, in Conformity to the *Pfalmift's* Description, even to *laugh and fmg*.—Let me juft obferve, That all thefe fine Scenes, all thefe rich Productions fprung — from what? From the *Diffofution* of the refpective Seeds. The Seeds planted by the Gardener, and the Grain fowed by the Husbandman, firft perifhed in the Ground, and then the copious Increate arofe.

Much after the fame Manner, a true Faith in *CHRIST* and his Righteoufnefs arifes—from what? From the *Ruins* of Self-fufficiency, and the *Death* of personal Excellency. Let me therefore intreat my *Theron*, ftill to take the Diary for his Counfellor; ftill to keep an Eye on the Depravity of his Nature, and the Mifcarriages of his Life. The more clearly We fee, the more deeply We feel, our

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Guilt and our Misery, the more highly shall We value the Obedience of our blessed SURETY.—In such a Heart, Faith will flourish as a Rose, and lift up its Head like a Cedar in *Lebanon*. To such a Soul, the great REDEEMER's Righteousness will be welcome, as Waters to the thirsty Soil, or as Rivers in the sandy Desert.



LETTER V.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

GIVE me leave to relate an uncommon Accident; which happened a little while ago, in this Neighbourhood; and of which I myself was a Spectator.—The Day was the Sabbath; the Place appropriated to divine Worship, was the Scene of this remarkable Affair; and the Instant of its taking Place, was the Beginning of the Sermon. When the Ambassador of *CHRIST*, risen with a venerable Aspect, and addressing his Audience with becoming Gravity, drew Attention “still as Night, “or Summer's Noon-tide Air.”

At this Interval of deep Composure, a Boy came running into the Church, breathless and trembling. He told, but in a low Voice, those who stood near, that

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that a Press-gang * was advancing, to besiege the Doors, and arrest the Sailors.—*An Alarm* was immediately taken. The Seamen, with much Hurry, and no small Anxiety, began to shift for themselves. The rest of the Congregation, perceiving an unusual Stir, were struck with Surprize.—A Whisper of Enquiry ran from Seat to Seat; which increased, by Degrees, into a confused Murmur, and a strange Commotion. No One could inform his Neighbour. Therefore, every One was left to solve the Appearance, from the Suggestions of a *timorous Imagination*. Some suspected, the Town was on fire. Some were apprehensive of an Invasion from the *Spaniards*. Others looked up, and looked round, to see if the Walls were not giving way, and the Roof falling upon their Heads.—In a few Moments, the Consternation became general. The Men stood like Statues, in silent Amazement, and unavailing Perplexity. The Women shrieked aloud; fell into Fits; sunk to the Ground in a Swoon. Nothing was seen, but *wild Disorder*; nothing heard, but *tumultuous Clamour*.—Drowned was the Preacher's Voice. Had He spoke in Thunder, his Message would scarce have been regarded. To have gone on with his Work, amidst such a Ferment of stunning Sounds and astonished Minds, had been like arguing with a Whirlwind, or talking to a Tempest.

This

* The Reader, it is hoped, will excuse whatever may appear *low*, or favour of the *Plebeian*, in any of these Circumstances. If *Aspasio* had set Himself to *invent* the Description of a Pannic, He would probably have formed it upon some more raised and dignified Incident. But as this was a real *Matter of Fact*, which lately happened in one of our Sea-port Towns; Truth, even in a plain Dress, may possibly be no less acceptable than Fiction, tricked up with the most splendid Embellishments.

This brought to my Mind that great *tremendous Day*, when the Heavens shall pass away; when the Earth shall be dissolved; and all its Inhabitants receive their final Doom.—If, at such Incidents of very inferior Dread, our Hearts are ready to fail; what unknown and inconceivable Astonishment must seize the guilty Conscience, when the Hand of the ALMIGHTY shall open those unparalleled Scenes of Wonder, Desolation, and Horror! —When the Trumpet shall sound—The Dead arise —The World be in Flames—The JUDGE on the Throne—and all Mankind at the Bar!

The Trumpet shall sound *, says the prophetic Teacher. And how alarming, how stupendous the Summons! Nothing equal to it, nothing like it, was ever heard through all the Regions of the Universe, or all the Revolutions of Time.—When conflicting Armies have discharged the bellowing Artillery of War, or when victorious Armies have shouted for Joy of the Conquest, the Seas and Shores have rung, the Mountains and Plains have echoed. But the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of GOD, will resound from Pole to Pole. It will shake the Pillars of Earth, and startle the Dungeon of Hell.—Stronger, stranger still! It will penetrate even the deepest Recesses of the Tomb. It will pour its amazing Thunder into all those Abodes of Silence. The Dead, the very Dead, shall hear.

When the Trumpet has sounded, *the Dead shall arise*.—In a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, the Graves open; the monumental Piles are cleft asunder; the Families, the Nations under-ground, start into Day. What an immense Harvest of Men and

* 1 Cor. xv. 52.

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and Women, springing up from the Caverns of the Earth, and the Depths of the Sea! Stand a while my Soul, and contemplate the wonderful Spectacle. — *Adam* formed in Paradise, and the Babe born but Yesterday, the earliest Ages, and latest Generations, meet upon the same Level. *Jews* and *Gentiles*, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, People of all Climes and Languages, unite in the promiscuous Throng. Here, those vast Armies, which, like Swarms of Locusts, covered Countries; which, with an irresistible Sweep, over-run Empires; here they all appear, and here they all are lost. Lost, like the small Drop of a Bucket, when plunged amidst the unfathomable and boundless Ocean.—O! the Multitudes! the Multitudes *! which these Eyes shall survey, when GOD calleth the Heavens from above, and the Earth that He may judge his People. What Shame must flush the guilty Cheek! What Anguish wound the polluted Breast! To have all their filthy Practices, and infamous Tempers, exposed before this innumerable Croud of Witnesses!—Fly, my *Theron*; and fly, my Soul; instantly let Us fly, earnestly let Us fly, to the purifying Blood of *JESUS*. That all our Sins may be blotted out; that We may be found *unblameable* and *unreproveable*, in the Presence of the assembled World; and, what is infinitely more to be revered, in the Sight of the omnipotent GOD.

When the Swarm issues, the Hive shall burn.
There is no more Need of this habitable Globe.

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* If, as it is commonly supposed, the Earth contains at any one Period of Time, no less than *four hundred Millions* of Souls; what a Congregation must all those Generations make, which have succeeded each other for seven thousand Years!

The Elect have fought the good Fight, and finished their Course. The Wicked have been tried, and found incorrigible. The important Drama is ended. Every Actor has performed his Part. Now therefore the Scenes are taken down; and the Stage is demolished.—*Woe be to the Earth, and to the Works thereof!* Its Streams are turned into Pitch, its Dust into Brimstone; and the Breath of the ALMIGHTY, like a Torrent of Fire, enkindles the Whole. See! see! how the Conflagration rages—spreads—prevails over all! The Forests are in a Blaze, and the Mountains are wrapt in Flame. Cities, Kingdoms, Continents, sink in the burning Deluge. *London, Britain, Europe* are no more. Through all the Receptacles of Water, through all the Tracts of Land, through the whole Extent of Air, nothing is discernable, but one vast, prodigious, fiery Ruin.—Where now are the *Treasures* of the Covetous? Where the *Possessions* of the Mighty? Where the *Delights* of the Voluptuary?—How wise, how happy are they, whose Portion is lodged in heavenly Mansions! Their Inheritance is incorruptible. Such as the last Fire cannot reach, nor the Dissolution of Nature impair.

We look upwards. The azure Vault cleaves. That stately Expanse is rolled back like a Scroll; the Regions of Bliss are seen; and the JUDGE, the JUDGE appears! *He cometh*, cries a mighty Seraph, the Herald * of his Approach, *He cometh*

* It seems, according to the Apostle's Representation, that, introductory to the Resurrection of the Dead, there will be *A Shout, the Voice of the Archangel, and the Trump of GOD.* 1 Thess. iv. 16.—First, *A Shout* of Joy and Triumph breaks from the Skies; made by Millions of attendant

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to judge the World in Righteousness, and minister true Judgment unto the People!—He cometh, not as formerly, in the Habit of a Servant, but clad with uncreated Glory, and arrayed in Light inaccessible. He cometh, not meanly followed by twelve weak Disciples, but magnificently attended with the Armies of Heaven. Angels and Archangels form his Retinue; Principalities and Powers wait at his Feet: the Cherubim and Seraphim, are upon the Wing to execute his Commands.—Behold Him, ye faithful Followers of the LAMB; and wonder and love. This is HE, who bore all *your* Iniquities on the ignominious Cross. This is HE, who fulfilled all Righteousness for the Justification of *your* Persons.—Behold Him, ye Despisers of his Grace; and wonder and perish. This is HE, whose merciful Overtures you have contemned, and on whose precious Blood You have trampled.

The great *white Throne* *, beyond Description august and formidable, is erected. The KING of Heaven, the LORD of Glory, takes his Seat on the dreadful Tribunal. *Mercy*, on his Right-hand, displays the Olive-branch of Peace, and holds forth the Crown of Righteousness. *Justice*, on his Left, poises the impartial Scale, and unveils

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attendant Spirits, or by all the Companies of Heaven.—Then follows *the Voice of the Archangel*, proclaiming the Approach of the REDEEMER; which, though heard singly through the vast Expanse, will probably be louder than those united Acclamations.—Last of all; *the Trumpet of GOD* sounds, and issues a Summons to the Dead, more awful and more majestic, than each preceding Alarm; closing the old, and opening the new World, with inconceivable Solemnity, and the most formidable Grandeur.

* Rev. xx. 11.

sheaths the Sword of Vengeance. While *Wisdom* and *Holiness*, brighter than ten thousand Suns, beam in his divine Aspect.—What are all the preceding Events, to this new Scene of Dignity and Awe? The Peals of Thunder, sounding in the Archangel's Trumpet; the Blaze of a burning World, and the strong Convulsions of expiring Nature; the unnumbered Myriads of the Dead, starting into instantaneous Life, and thronging the astonished Skies; all these seem *familiar* Incidents, compared with the Appearance of the incarnate J E H O V A H.—Amazement, more than Amazement, is all around. Terror and Glory unite in their Extremes. From the Sight of his majestic Eye, from the insupportable Splendors of his Face, the Earth itself and the very Heavens *flee away*.—How then? Oh! how shall the Ungodly stand? Stand in his angry Presence, and draw near to this consuming Fire?

Yet draw near they must, and take their Tryal—their decisive Tryal—at his righteous Bar. Every Action comes under Examination. For each idle Word they must give Account. Not so much as a secret Thought escapes this exact Scrutiny.—How shall the Criminals, the impenitent Criminals, either conceal their Guilt, or elude the Sentence? They have to do with a Sagacity, too keen to be deceived; with a Power, too strong to be resisted; and (O! terrible, terrible Consideration!) with a Severity of most just Displeasure, that will never relent, never be intreated more.—What ghastly Despairours on their pale Looks! What racking Agonies rend their distracted Hearts! The Bloody Axe and the torturing Wheel,

Wheel, are Ease, are Downe, compared with their prodigious Woe. And (O holy GOD! wonderful in thy Doings! fearful in thy Judgments!) even this prodigious Woe is the *gentlest* of Visitations, compared with that Indignation and Wrath, which are hanging over their guilty Heads—which are even now falling on all the Sons of Rebellion—which will plunge them deep in aggravated Misery and endless Destruction.

*And is there a last Day? and must there come
A sure, a fix'd, irrevocable Doom?*

Surely then, to use the Words of a pious Prelate*, it should be “the main Care of our Lives and Deaths, what shall give Us Peace and Acceptation before the dreadful Tribunal of GOD. What but Righteousness? What Righteousness or whose? Ours or *CHRIST*’s? Ours, in the inherent Graces wrought in Us, in the holy Works wrought by Us? Or *CHRIST*’s, in his most perfect Obedience, and meritorious Satisfaction, wrought for Us, and applied to Us? The *Popish* Faction is for the former. We Protestants are for the latter. GOD is as direct on our Side, as his Word can make Him; every where blazoning the Defects of our own Righteousness, every where extolling the perfect Obedience of our REDEEMER’s.”

Behold! says the everlasting KING, I lay in Sion, for a Foundation, a Stone; a tried Stone; a precious Corner-stone; a sure Foundation: HE THAT BELIEVETH, SHALL NOT MAKE HASTE †.

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* Bishop Hall.

† Isai. xxviii. 16.

As this Text contains so noble a Display of our SAVIOUR's consummate Ability for his great Work; as it is admirably calculated, to preserve the Mind from distressing Fears, and to settle it in a steady Tranquility; You will give me leave to touch it cursorily with my Pen. Just as I should descant upon it in Conversation, was I now sitting in one of your agreeable Arbors, and enjoying your more agreeable Company.

How beautiful the Gradation! How lively the Description! and how very important the practical Improvement! Or I might say, the Inscription which is engraven on this wonderful Stone.—*Behold!* Intended to rouse and fix our most attentive Regard. The GOD of Heaven speaks. He speaks, and every Syllable is Balm; every Sentence is rich with Consolation. If ever therefore We have Ears to hear, let it be to this SPEAKER, and on this Occasion.

A Stone. Every Thing else is sliding Sand; is yielding Air; is a breaking Bubble. Wealth will prove a vain Shadow; Honour an empty Breath; Pleasure a delusory Dream; our own Righteousness a Spider's Web. If on these We rely, Disappointment must ensue, and Shame be inevitable. Nothing but *CHRIST*, nothing but *CHRIST*, can stably support our spiritual Interests, and realize our Expectations of true Happiness. And, blessed be the divine Goodness! He is, for this Purpose, not a Stone only, but

A tried Stone. Tried, in the Days of his Humanity, by all the Vehemence of Temptations, and all the Weight of Afflictions: yet, like Gold from the Furnace, rendered more shining and illustrious by

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the fiery Scrutiny.—Tried, under the Capacity of a SAVIOUR, by Millions and Millions of depraved, wretched, ruined Creatures; who have always found Him *perfectly able*, and as *perfectly willing*, to expiate the most enormous Guilt—to deliver from the most inveterate Corruptions—and save, to the very uttermost, all that come unto GOD through Him.

A Corner-stone. Which not only sustains, but unites the Edifice: incorporating both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Believers of various Languages, and manifold Denominations—here, in one harmonious Bond of brotherly Love—hereafter, in one common Participation of eternal Joy.

A precious Stone. More precious than Rubies; the Pearl of great Price; and the Desire of all Nations. Precious, with regard to the divine Dignity of his Person, and the unequalled Excellency of his mediatorial Offices. In these, and in all respects, greater than *Jonah*—wiser than *Solomon*—fairer than the Children of Men—chiefest among ten thousand—and, to the awakened Sinner, or enlightened Believer, *altogether lovely* *.

A sure Foundation †. Such as no Pressure can shake: equal, more than equal to every Weight; even to Sin, the heaviest Load in the World.—*The Rock of Ages*; such as never has failed, never will fail, those humble Penitents, who cast their Burden upon the LORD REDEEMER; who roll all † their

* Cant. v. 16.

† *Fundamentum fundatissimum.*

† *Roll*—This is the exact Sense of the sacred Phrase, *גל אל ידמה* Psal. xxii. 8. xxxvii. 5. Prov. xvi. 3. I am not ignorant, that some People have presumed to *censure*,

their Guilt, and fix all their Hopes, on this immoveable Basis.—Or, as the Words may be rendered, *A Foundation* *! *A Foundation*! There is a fine Spirit of Vehemency in the Sentence, thus understood. It speaks the Language of Exultation, and expresses an important Discovery. That which Mankind infinitely want; that which Multitudes seek, and are not able to find; it is here! it is here! This, this is the Foundation for their Pardon, their Peace, their eternal Felicity.

Whosoever

and many have been shy of using, this bold and vigorous Metaphor. Which nevertheless appears to me, the most just, the most significant, and therefore the most truly beautiful, that could be used on the Occasion.

A Burden, that is manageable and comparatively light, We carry, We cast, We throw. But that which is extremely ponderous and quite unwieldy, We move only by rolling. Accordingly, Stones of an enormous Size, are called by the Oriental Writers, *Stones of Rolling*. *Ut pote ponderosiores, quam ut supportari queant.* Ezra v. 8.—Consider the Expression in this View, and nothing can represent, with greater or with equal Energy, that prodigious Load, which, heavier than the Sand of the Sea, oppresses the guilty Conscience.—By substituting any other Word, We enfeeble and dilute the Sense: We lose the capital and striking Idea.

Vain Man would be wise. Let Him not then, for the Credit of his Ingenuity, adventure to correct the Language of Omniscience. This, if any Thing in Nature, is

Periculosa plenum Opus Aleæ.

This will be sure to discover, not his fine Taste, but his groveling Apprehension, and his rampant Pride. Let Him improve, with the Plasterer's Brush, the glowing Colours of the Rainbow. Let Him heighten, by Fuller's Soap, the Lustre of the new fallen Snows. This will be a more modest Attempt, and a much easier Task, than to make an *Index expurgatorius*, or a Table of Errata, when the SPIRIT of Inspiration dictates.

Whoever believeth, though pressed with Adversities, or surrounded by Dangers, shall not make haste. But, free from tumultuous and perplexing Thoughts, preserved from rash and precipitate Steps, He shall possess his Soul in Patience. Knowing the Sufficiency of those Merits, and the Fidelity of that Grace, on which he has reposed his Confidence, shall quietly and without Perturbation wait for an expected End. — And not only amidst the perilous or disastrous Changes of Life, but even in the Day of everlasting Judgment, such Persons shall stand with Boldness. They shall look up, to the grand ARBITRATOR — look round, on all the Solemnity of his Appearance — look forward, to the unalterable Sentence — and neither feel Anxiety, nor fear Damnation.

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Such,

* *shall not make haste*, Wth N^o This metaphorical Expression, though it might be very intelligible to an Hebrew, is to an English Reader, like some fine Picture placed in a disadvantageous Light. We may possibly illustrate the Prophet's Meaning, and exemplify his Assertion, if we compare the Conduct of Moses, with that of the Israelites; on viewing the fatal Catastrophe of Dathan and Abiram. — When the Earth trembled under their Feet; when the Ground opened its horrid jaws; when the presumptuous Sinners went down alive into the Pit; when the tremendous Chasm closed upon the screaming Wretches; the Children of Israel, it is written, *fled at the Cry of them.* Fled, in wild and hasty Confusion; for they *said, Lest the Earth swallow up Us also.* — But Moses, who denounced the dreadful Doom; Moses, who was sure of the divine Protection; Moses made no such precipitate or disorderly Haste. He stood calm and composed; saw the whole alarming Transaction, without any uneasy Emotions of Fear, or any unnecessary Attempts to escape. So that his Behaviour seems to be a clear and apposite Comment on Isaiah's Phrase. See Numb. xvi.

*Such, in that Day of Terrors, shall be seen
To face the Thunders with a godlike Mein.
The Planets drop; their Thoughts are fix'd above:
The Center shakes; their Hearts disdain to move.*

This Portion of Scripture, which, I hope, will both delight and edify my Friend, recalls our Attention to the Subject of my present Letter—to those propitiatory Sufferings, and that justifying Righteousness, which, imputed to Sinners, are the Ground of their Comfort, and the Bulwark of their Security.—We have heard *Moses* and the Prophets. What say the Writers of the *New Testament*? They, whose Understandings were opened by the “WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR,” to discern the Meaning of the antient Oracles. Who must therefore be the most competent Judges of their true Import, and our surest Guides in settling their Sense.—Do they patronize our Interpretation of the Prophets? Do they set their Seal to the Authenticity of our Doctrine?

St. *Luke*, in his ecclesiastical History, has preserved this weighty Declaration of the Apostles; *We believe, that, through the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, We shall be saved, even as they* *. Here the Thing is implied.—St. *Peter*, in the Introduction to one of his Theological Epistles, thus addresses his happy Correspondents: *To them that have obtained like precious Faith, in the Righteousness † of*

* Acts xv. 11.

† 2 Pet. i. 1. The Phrase is *πιστις εν δικαιοσυνη*, which most naturally signifies Faith in the Righteousness; expressing

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our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Here the Point is expressly asserted.—With equal Clearness is the Doctrine delivered by *Matthew* the Evangelist; *Seek ye first the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteousness* *. What can the Kingdom of GOD mean? An Experience of the Power, and an Enjoyment of the Privileges of the Gospel. What are we to understand by *his Righteousness*? Surely, the Righteousness which is worthy of this grand Appellation, and peculiar to that blessed Institution.

Would We learn, What is the great and distinguishing Peculiarity of the Gospel? *St. Paul* informs Us; *Therein the Righteousness of GOD is revealed, from Faith to Faith*. As this Text leads Us into the Epistle to the *Romans*—as this Epistle is, both for the Propriety of its Method, and for the Importance of its Doctrine, singularly excellent—it may not be amiss, to examine its Structure, and enquire into its Design.

The Apostle writes to a promiscuous People: who had been converted, partly from *Judaism*, partly from *Gentilism*. His Aim is, to strike at the very Root of their former Errors respectively—to

turn

pressing the *Object*, on which the Faith of Christians is fixed.—If We retain the common Translation, it proves another very momentous Truth: that *the Righteousness of our GOD, even of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*, is the one meritorious procuring Cause of all spiritual Blessings; of Faith, as well as of Fruition; of Grace, as well as of Glory.—I say *our GOD*; so *JESUS CHRIST* is styled in the Original; in the third Verse, his Power is called *divine*; and I wonder, how the Translators were induced, to transpose that important Pronoun,

our.

* Matt. vi. 33.

turn them wholly to the Superabundant Grace of GOD, and establish them solely on the all-sufficient Merits of CHRIST.

The Gentiles were, for the most part, grossly ignorant of GOD, and stupidly negligent of invisible Interests. If Any among them had any Regard to the DEITY; their Virtues, they imagined, were meritorious of all that the DEITY could bestow. If they committed Sin; Sin, they supposed, might easily be expiated by Sacrifices *. A few of their judicious Sages taught, that the most probable Means of obtaining Pardon, was a sincere Reformation of Life.

The Jews, as it is well known, placed a mighty Dependence on their Affinity to Abraham, and the Covenant made with their Fathers; on their Ad-

herence

• WITSIU *Animad-versions Irenicæ*, Cap. vii. — A choice little Piece of polemical Divinity, perhaps the very best that is extant. In which the most important Controversies are fairly stated, accurately discussed, and judiciously determined; with a Perspicuity of Sense, and a Solidity of Reasoning, exceeded by nothing, but the remarkable Candour of the Sentiments.

The *Oeconomia Fœderum*, written by the same Hand, is a Body of Divinity; in its Method so well digested—in its Doctrines so truly evangelical—and (what is not very usual with our systematic Writers) in its Language so refined and elegant—in its Manner so affectionate and animating—that I would venture to recommend it, to every young Student in Divinity: I would not scruple to risk all my Reputation upon the Merits of this Performances and I cannot but lament it, as one of my greatest Losses, that I was no sooner acquainted with this most excellent Author.—All whose Works, have such a Delicacy of Composition, and such a sweet Savour of Holiness, that I know not any Comparison more proper to represent their true Character, than the golden Pot which had Manna; and was outwardly, bright with burnished Gold—inwardly, rich with heavenly Food.

herence to the Letter of the moral Law, and their scrupulous Performance of ceremonial Institutions. —Gentiles and Jews agreeing in this Mistake, that they looked for the Pardon of Guilt, and the Attainment of Happiness, from some Services done, or some Qualities acquired by *Themselves*.

Against these Errors the zealous Apostle draws his Pen. He enters the Lists like a true Champion of *CHRIST*, in the most spirited and heroic Manner imaginable. *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of CHRIST*: for, however it may be deemed Foolishness by the polite *Greeks*, or prove a Stumbling-block to the carnal *Jews*, it is the Power of *GOD* unto * *Salvation*: it is the grand Instrument, which he has ordained for this blessed Purpose, and which he will certainly crown with the desired Success.—Whence has the Gospel this very peculiar Power? Because, therein a *Righteousness* is revealed; not demanded of impotent Sinners, but revealed and made ready for their free Acceptance. A true and perfect Righteousness, which obliterates all Guilt, and furnishes a solid Title to eternal Life.—What Righteousness is this? The Righteousness, not of Sincerity, but of Perfection; not of Man, but of *GOD*. Which was promised by *GOD* in the Scriptures; was introduced by *GOD* in the Person of his *SON*; and, on Account of its consummate Excellency, is both acceptable and available in his Sight.

This Righteousness is from Faith to Faith †: held forth, as it were, by a promising *GOD*, and apprehended

Rom. i. 16. An ingenious Friend proposes to translate the Passage, according to the following Connection; The Righteousness

prehended by a believing Soul. Who, first, gives a firm *Assent* to the Gospel; then, cordially *accepts* its Blessings. From a Conviction that the Doctrine is true, passes to a Persuasion that the Privileges are his own.—When this is effected, a Foundation is laid for all Happiness; a Principle is wrought, to produce all Holiness.

But why was it requisite, that such a Righteousness should be provided by GOD, and revealed in the Gospel?—Because not *Gentile*, nor *Jew*, either possessed, or could attain, any Righteousness of their own: and this Righteousness, though so absolutely necessary for their fallen State, was infinitely remote from all human Apprehensions. The latter Assertion is self evident. The former is particularly demonstrated.—First, with regard to the *Gentiles*. The Generality of whom, were abandoned to the most scandalous Excesses of Vice; and they who had escaped the grosser Pollutions, fell short in the Duties of natural Religion.—Next, with regard to the *Jews*.

ousness of GOD by Faith, is revealed to Faith. The Proposal is truly delicate; the Clause, thus transposed, is very perspicuous; and the Doctrine, contained in it, highly important. As a farther Recommendation of the Criticism, We may observe; That *δικαιοσύνη ἐκ πίστεως* is, with the Apostle, a customary and a favourite Way of expressing Himself. The only Difficulty lies in the *Transposition*, which this Interpretation requires. Whether this may be admitted, I refer to the judicious Reader.—However He shall determine, it is, I think, from this Text undeniably certain; That Faith is not our justifying Righteousness, but only *receptive* of it.—That there is just the same Difference between them, as between a costly Gift and the empty Hand; or between the Spring revealed to *Hagar*, and *Hagar's* Act of taking the Water, for the Refreshment of Herself and her Son. See *Gen. xxi. 19.*

Jews. Many of whom lived in open Violation of the external Commandment; and not One of them acted up to the internal Purity, required by the *Mosaic* Precepts.—From which Premises, this Conclusion is deduced; that each of them had transgressed even *their own* Rule of Action; that all of them were, on this Account, utterly inexcusable; therefore *by the Works of the Law*, whether dictated by Reason, or delivered by *Moses*, *no Mortal is justified* * in the Sight of GOD.

Lest any should imagine, that Righteousness may be obtained, if not by a Conformity to the Law of Nature, or the Law of *Moses*, yet by an evangelical Obedience, He farther declares; That Sinners are *justified freely*, without any Regard to their own Endowments, of what Kind soever; *through the Redemption*, the complete Redemption of *JESUS CHRIST* †. After such a Manner, as may lay them low in Humiliation, even while it exalts them to the Kingdom of Heaven. After such a Manner, as may bring Life and Salvation to their Souls, while it strips them of all Pretence to Glorifying; and consigns the whole Honour to GOD the FATHER, and his SON *JESUS CHRIST*.

Upon

* *Rom. iii. 20.* There seems to be a Kind of *humbling or degrading* Turn in the Apostle's Language *κατακατε*, which may possibly be preserved in the Translation, *No Mortal*.—We may farther observe the very nice and exact Manner of the sacred Argumentation. Lest it should be said, and from the Authority of *St. James*, *A Man is justified by Works*; our unerring Writer tacitly allows, *That before Men* this is practicable, *before Men* this is proper; but *not before GOD*.

† *Rom. iii. 24.*

Upon the Whole; here are three Positions, of the last Importance—Salvation is by *Righteousness*—Righteousness is by *Faith*—Only by Faith, whether to the Jew, or to the Gentile. All these Particulars are confirmed by that single Sentence, quoted from the Prophet; *The Just, the truly righteous, shall live, shall inherit everlasting Life; not by his own Works, but by Faith in the Obedience of a SAVIOUR.*

In the Prosecution of this very momentous Subject, our sacred Disputant removes an Objection, which is as common, as it is plausible. *Do We make void the Law through Faith? Do We render it a vain Institution; such as never has been, never will be fulfilled?—GOD forbid!* This were a flagrant Dishonour to the Divine LEGISLATOR and his holy Commandments. What We would utterly abhor, rather than countenance in any Degree.—On the contrary, *We establish the Law**; not only as We receive it for a *Rule of Life*, but as We expect no Salvation without a proper, without a *perfect* Conformity to its Injunctions.—How can this be effected? By qualifying its Sense, and softening it into an easier System? This were to *vacate* the Law; to deprive it of its Honour, and its End. *Its Honour*; which is the most refined Spirituality, and sublime Perfection: *its End*; which is to convince of Sin, and make Way for a SAVIOUR.—We establish the Law by an incomparably better Expedient; by believing in that great MEDIATOR, who has obeyed its every Precept;

* Rom. iii. 31. An incontestable Proof, that the Apostle treats of the moral Law.

Precept; sustained its whole Penalty; and satisfied all its Requirements, in their utmost Latitude.

Farther to corroborate his Scheme, He proves it from the renowned Examples of *Abraham* and *David*.—The Instance of *Abraham* is so clear, that it wants no Comment. Any Paraphrase would rather obscure, than illustrate it.—The other, derived from the Testimony of the *Psalmist*, may admit the Commentator's Tool. Yet not to hammer it into a new Form, but only to clear away the Rubbish; to rescue it from Misrepresentation; and place it in a true Light. *Even as David describeth the Blessedness of the Man, to whom GOD imputeth Righteousness without Works, saying; Blessed are They, whose Unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose Sins are covered: Blessed is the Man, to whom the LORD will not impute Sin* *.

—Here is *Imputation* asserted—The Imputation of *Righteousness*—Of *Righteousness without Works*; without any Respect to, or any Co-operation from, any Kind of human Works. It is a Blessing vouchsafed to the Ungodly; not founded on a Freedom from Sin, but procuring a Remission of its Guilt.

Some, I know, have attempted to resolve all the Force of this Passage, into an Argument for the *Sameness* of Pardon and justifying *Righteousness*. Whereas, the Apostle undertakes to prove, not that Pardon and justifying *Righteousness* are identically the same; but that Justification, in all its Branches, and in its full Extent, is *absolutely free*. To maintain which Position, He argues—“This Doctrine is as true, as it is comfortable. It agrees with the Experience, and has received the Attestation of *David*. When he speaks of the
“blessed

* Rom. iv. 6, 7.

“ blessed and happy Man, He describes Him, not
 “ as One that has been innocent, but guilty : not
 “ as having any Claim to the divine Favour, on
 “ account of deserving Performances, or recom-
 “ mending Properties ; but as owing all his Ac-
 “ ceptance to that sovereign Grace, which *forgives*
 “ *Iniquities, and blots out Sin.* Such is the Case
 “ with regard to that evangelical Justification, which
 “ We preach. *Even as ;* it is, in the *Manner* of its
 “ *Vouchsafement*, perfectly similar to the Blessedness
 “ celebrated by the *Psalmist*.”—The Apostle’s Eye,
 is not so directly upon the Nature of the Privilege,
 as upon the *Freeness* with which it is granted. Nor
 can Any infer from the Tenour of his Reasoning,
 that to be forgiven, is the same as to be made Right-
 teous ; only that both are Acts of infinitely rich
 Mercy ; designed for Sinners ; promised to Sinners ;
 bestowed on Sinners. Who have nothing, nothing
 of their own, either to boast, or to plead, or so
 much as to pretend.

In the fifth Chapter, from Verse the twelfth to the
 End, the sacred Penman points out the *Cause*, and
 explains the *Method* of Justification, of which this
 is the Sum—That *CHRIST*, in pursuance of the
 Covenant of Grace, fulfilled all Righteousness in the
 Stead of his People—That this Righteousness, being
 performed for them, is imputed to them—That, by
 virtue of this gracious Imputation, they are absolved
 from Guilt, and intitled to Bliss ; as thoroughly ab-
 solved, and as fully intitled, as if in their own Per-
 sons they had undergone the expiatory Sufferings,
 and yielded the meritorious Obedience.—Lest it
 should seem strange, in the Opinion of a *Jew* or a
Gentile, to hear of being justified by the Righteous-
 ness

ness of *Another*, the wary Apostle urges a parallel Case; recorded in the *Jewish* Revelation, but ratified by *universal* * Experience; namely, Our being condemned for the Unrighteousness of *Another*.—In this Respect, He observes, *Adam* was, a Type of our LORD; or, a *Figure of HIM that was to come* †. The Relations the same, but the Effects happily reversed. *Adam* the Head of his Posterity; *CHRIST* the Head of his People. *Adam's* Sin was imputed to all his natural Descendants; *CHRIST's* Righteousness is imputed to all his spiritual Offspring. *Adam's* Transgression brought Death into the World, and all our Woe; *CHRIST's* Obedience brings Life and all our Happiness ‡.—The Whole closes with this very obvious and no less weighty Inference; *Therefore, as by the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even so, by the Righteousness of One, the free Gift came upon all Men unto Justification of Life* ||.

I do not recollect any other Similitude, which the Apostle so minutely sifts, and so copiously unfolds.

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* By the Pains and Death which *Infants*, in every Nation, endure. Which are unquestionably Punishments, and to which they are doomed by the righteous Judgment of GOD.

† Rom. v. 14.

‡ *Quemadmodum Peccatum Adami, says BENGELIUS, sine Peccatis quæ postea commisimus, Mortem attulit nobis; sic Justitia CHRISTI, sine bonis Operibus, quæ deinceps a nobis fiunt, Vitam nobis conciliat.* That is; As the Sin of *Adam*, without any Concurrence of the Sins, which We Ourselves respectively commit, occasioned our Ruin; so the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, abstracted from all Consideration of our personal Obedience, procures our Recovery.

|| Rom. v. 18.

He explains it; He applies it; He resumes it; He dwells upon it; and scarcely knows how to desist from it. I am sure, you will not blame me, if I imitate the sacred Author; if I revert to the Subject; and quote another Passage, from the same Paragraph. *Much more shall They, who receive Abundance of Grace and of the Gift of Righteousness, reign in Life by One, JESUS CHRIST*.*

I was once inclined to think, that the inspired Writer specifies, in this Place (what I apprehended to be the two grand Blessings, procured by IMMANUEL) *Remission of Sins*, and *Imputation of Righteousness*. But this Notion, though not without its Patrons †, now appears incorrect and groundless. The Imputation of *CHRIST's* Righteousness is, not a Part, but the Cause—the whole entire Cause of our Pardon, our Peace, our complete Justification. And this Righteousness, the Apostle declares, is *of Grace*. It is made ours, not on Account of any Deeds or Duties, which We perform; but from the *Abundance of Grace*, which GOD dispenses.—It is called *a Gift* ‡. Every Gift implies something, not originally our own, but another's. This Gift must signify, not what We Our-

selves

* Rom. v. 17.

† The great Dr. GOODWIN seems to patronize it—when He says, “Over and above the Man's Absolution, there is some other Thing to be added, *viz.* The Imputation of Righteousness”—when He says again, “Though Pardon and the consequent Imputation of Righteousness are never to be separated.” Vol. III. pag. 340.—Whereas I should rather say, That Pardon of Sin and Acceptance to Life, can never be separated from our REDEEMER's Righteousness. Which is, not the *Consequent* of any, but the *Cause* and Origin of all spiritual Blessings.

‡ Δωρον εστιν αυτη ολοκληρον. Chrysoſt.

selves have acquired, but what was fulfilled by our SURETY; and is, by an Act of heavenly Indulgence, consigned over to our Enjoyment.—Accordingly, they who are interested in this Blessing, are styled, not *Workers*, but *Receivers*; not Purchasers, but *Heirs*, of the Righteousness which is by Faith.

See the distinguished Pre-eminence and Richness of the Gospel! *Philosophy* proposed many refined Precepts of Righteousness, but could not bestow a Righteousness upon any Person. The *Law* of GOD itself, though the perfect Rule of all Righteousness, is weak through the Flesh, and cannot make the Comers thereunto righteous. Whereas, by the *Gospel*, We are not only taught the true justifying Righteousness, but it is *given* to Us, and put upon Us.—Nay; We have it in *Abundance*; in its most consummate Form, and highest Perfection. So that neither Man shall be able to wish, nor can GOD himself require, a greater or a better.—This is a wonderful Saying, but it will appear true, if We consider another Clause from this incomparable Chapter. Suffer me, therefore, to bring forth another Jewel, from this rich Treasury of the Gospel. And the rather, as the Jewel, which I am going to produce, was the first that beamed Light and Lustre upon my own Mind. Was the first happy Occasion of guiding my Feet into the Way of Truth. *As by the Disobedience of One Man, many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of One, shall many be made Righteous* *.—The *Disobedience* of One, is the Disobedience of *Adam*; his actual Transgression of the divine Law. Hereby, *Many were*
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made

* Rom. v. 19.

made Sinners, even before they had done any evil Work. Sinners, in such a Sense, as to become obnoxious unto Condemnation, and justly liable to Death.—All this, I think, is, from the Apostle's own Words, indisputable. If We would preserve the Propriety of his Antithesis, or the Force of his Reasoning, We must allow; That the *Obedience of One*, is the Obedience of *CHRIST*; his actual and complete Performance of the whole Law. Hereby, *Many are made Righteous*, even before they have done any good Work. Righteous, in such a Sense, as to be secure from all Condemnation; and, on Principles of Justice, entitled to Life eternal.—How clear and easy is this Meaning! How regular and exact this Argumentation! What Subtlety of Evasion must be used, before You can give a different Turn to the instructive Text!

This is the most consistent Sense, in which I can understand *Rom. viii. 5. That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in Us, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the SPIRIT.* That the Righteousness, required by the holy but broken Law, might be thoroughly accomplished. Accomplished in our Nature, and by our REPRESENTATIVE. So as to be deemed, in point of legal Estimation, fulfilled *for Us and by Us* *. This, I say,

* It is remarked by a judicious Critic, and very evangelical, therefore very valuable Expofitor, that the Preposition *per* sometimes signifies *by* or *for*; and is so translated, *Matt. v. 34. Heb. i. 1.* See Dr. GRISE's Exposition of the *New Testament*.—It is declared by the *Helvetian Church*, expounding this Passage, and making her public Confession; “That *CHRIST* is the Perfector of the Law, and our Fulfilling of it. Who, as He took away the Curse of the Law, when He was made

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say, is most consistent with the Tenour of St. Paul's Arguing, and with the Import of his Language.—*With the Tenour of his Arguing*: for, He undertakes to demonstrate the *Impossibility* of our Justification, by any personal Conformity to the Law. Whereas, if We could satisfy its Penalty, and obey its Precepts; or, in other Words, fulfil its Righteousness; this Impossibility would cease.—*With the Import of his Language*: for, the original Phrase denotes, not a *sincere*, but a *complete* Obedience; not what We are enabled to perform, but what the Law has a Right * to demand. Which, every One must acknowledge, is not fulfilled in any mere Man, since the Fall; but was fulfilled by JESUS CHRIST, for our Good, and in our Stead.—This Interpretation preserves the Sentences distinct, and makes a very natural Introduction for the following Clause; where the Persons interested in this Privilege, are described by their Fruits, *who walk not after the Flesh, but after the SPIRIT*. Implying, that Justification and Sanctification are, like the *ever-corresponding* Motion of our Eyes, inseparable Concomitants; and We vainly pretend to the former, if We continue destitute of the latter.

D d 3

We

“made a Curse for Us; so doth He communicate to Us, by Faith, his Fulfilling thereof.”

* It may be worth our while to observe, that St. Paul, when treating on this Subject, uses three several Words; each distinct, though all derived from the Original.—*Δικαιωσις*, which expresses *Justification*; the accounting or declaring a Person righteous.—*Δικαιοσύνη*, which never signifies Justification, but *Righteousness*; either performed by Us, or imputed to Us.—*Δικαιώμα*, the Phrase which occurs in this Place, and denotes the *Right* or *Demand* of the Law; as that, whose Accomplishment is indispensibly necessary, in order to the Justification of Man.

We have produced positive Proofs of our Doctrine.—We have heard an Apostle declaring the assured Happiness, and complete Justification of *true Believers*.—Let Us now observe the same sagacious Judge of Men and Things, discovering the Danger of those *Self-justiciaries*, who reject the REDEEMER's Righteousness.

He is filled with the darkest Apprehensions, concerning his Brethren the *Jews*. He is impressed with melancholy Presages, relating to their eternal State*. —What was the Cause of this tender Solicitude? Had they cast off all Religion, and given themselves over to gross Immoralities? On the contrary, they were Worshippers of the true GOD; and had, in their Way, not only a *Regard*, but a *Zeal* for his Honour†.—Wherefore then does this compassionate Father in *Israel* feel the same trembling Uneasiness for his Kinsmen according to the Flesh, as *Eli* felt for the endangered Ark? Himself assigns the Reason. Because, *they being ignorant of GOD's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of GOD*‡. Not knowing that immaculate Holiness, which the perfect Nature, and equally perfect Law of the most High GOD, require—being wilfully ignorant of that consummate Obedience, which an incarnate GOD vouchsafed to perform, for the Justification of them, who are without Strength—they established, or rather they *went about*; they sedulously but foolishly endeavoured, *to establish* their own Righteousness; to make it, scanty and decrepit as it was, the Basis of all

* Rom. ix. 2.

† Rom. x. 2.

‡ Rom. x. 3.

all their Hopes.—Thus were they resting their everlasting ALL on a Bottom, not precarious only, but irreparably ruinous. A boundless Eternity the Fabric! Yet they built (wonder O Heavens!) on the Foam of the Waters! And (which added Stubbornness to their Folly) in avowed Contempt of *the Righteousness which is by Faith*; that strong and sure Foundation, laid by GOD's own almighty Hand in *Sion*.—For this, the good Apostle was afflicted, with “great Heaviness, and continual Sorrow.” For this, He made the Prophet's pathetic Complaint his own; *Oh! that my Head were Waters, and my Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might bewail, Day and Night **, the incorrigible Perverseness of my People! *For my People have committed two Evils: in not thankfully submitting to the Righteousness of GOD, they have forsaken the Fountain of living Waters: in attempting to establish their own Righteousness, they have hewed themselves out Cisterns, broken Cisterns, that can hold no Water †.*

Having shewed *their* fatal Error, He strengthens his Representation, by displaying the happy Success of the *Gentiles*—*What shall We say then?* This, however improbable it may seem, We confidently affirm, *That the Gentiles, who followed not after Righteousness; who had no Knowledge of it, and no Concern about it; even they have attained to Righteousness ‡.*—Strange Assertion! How is this possible!

* Jer. ix. 1.

† Jer. ii. 13.

‡ Surely, this must signify more, than “attaining to the Profession of a Religion, whereby they may be justified and saved.” To this Multitudes attain, who continue, as the Prophet speaks, *stout-hearted, and far*

sible! To be sure, the Righteousness which they attained, could not result from any Thing personal; could not consist in moral Virtues or religious Duties. Instead of practising moral Virtues, or performing religious Duties, they lay immersed in Sensuality, and were abandoned to Idolatry. It must therefore be the evangelical, the imputed Righteousness; *even that which was wrought by CHRIST, and is received by Faith* *.

Israel, in the mean time, the nominal Israel, who, with great Pretensions to Sanctity, and many costly Oblations, *followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness*. Attained! They have done nothing less. They are fallen vastly short of it; they are pronounced guilty by it; they stand condemned before it †.—Where-

fore
from Righteousness. Who derive no real Benefit from their Profession; but are rendered utterly inexcusable, and liable to more aggravated Condemnation.

* Surely, *the Righteousness which is by Faith*, cannot consist “in humbly committing the Soul to CHRIST, “in the Way that he hath appointed.” According to this Notion, the justifying Righteousness would spring from Ourselves; would be constituted by an Act of our own, and not by the perfect Obedience of our LORD.

I am sorry to see this, and the preceding Interpretation, in the Works of an *Expositor*, whose Learning I admire, whose Piety I reverence, and whose Memory I honour. Yet I must say, on this Occasion, with one of the antient Philosophers; *Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas*.

† This, I apprehend, is the Purport of the Apostle's Speech, when He tells Us, that his Countrymen *had not attained unto the Law of Righteousness*. He uses the Figure *μὴ ὄντας*, and means more than He expresses. He means, what St. Chrysostom has, in his Exposition, supplied; Παρὸντος γὰρ νομοῦ, καὶ ἐπιτελουστος ἡσθῆς ἐν αἵματι. He expresses Himself somewhat like the dramatic Poet, who says of certain literary Pretenders,

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fore did they so grossly mistake, and so grievously miscarry? Especially, as they were both sincere and assiduous in their Pursuit. *Because*, they forsook the good old Way, in which *Abraham, David*, and their pious Ancestors walked. They adopted a new Scheme; and must needs substitute their own, instead of relying on a SAVIOUR's Righteousness. *They sought* for Justification, *not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law* *. A Method, which their Fathers knew not; which their GOD ordained not; and which proved, as it always will prove, not only abortive, but destructive.—At this Stone they stumbled. On this Rock they split. Let their Ruin be a *Way-mark*, and the Apostle's Observation a *Light-house*, to my *Theron*.

Our zealous Writer tries every Expedient. He mingles Hope with Terror. Having pointed out the *Rock*, on which the *Israelites* suffered Shipwreck; He directs Us to the *Haven*, in which Sinners may cast Anchor, and find Safety. He gives Us a fine descriptive View of the *Christian's* complete Happiness. He opens (if I may continue the Metaphor) a free and ample Port for perishing Souls. Not formed by a Neck of Land, or a Ridge of Mountains, but by a magnificent Chain of spiritual Blessings. All proceeding from, all terminating in,

*Qui se primos esse rerum omnium existimant
Nec tamen sunt.*

That is, *they are quite the reverse*.—Or like the Prophet in the Close of this Chapter, who assures the Believers in JESUS, *They shall not be ashamed*; that is, they shall be encouraged, emboldened, and “obtain Honour, and “Glory, and Immortality.”

* Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32.

in, that precious Corner-stone *JESUS CHRIST*. Who of *GOD* is made unto Us *Wisdom*, and *Righteousness*, and *Sanctification*, and *Redemption* *. *Wisdom*, to enlighten our ignorant Minds. *Righteousness* †, to justify our guilty Persons. *Sanctification* †, to renew our depraved Natures. *Redemption*, to rescue Us from all Evil; and render Us, both in Body and Soul, perfectly and eternally happy.—Let it be remarked, how carefully our inspired Writer sets aside all *Sufficiency*, as well as all *Merit* in Man. He represents the whole of our Salvation, both in its Procurement and Application, as a Work of freest Grace. *CHRIST* is, and not We Ourselves, the Author of this glorious Restoration, the Cause of this great Felicity. *He is made* all this unto Us—How? Not by our own Resolution and Strength; but of *GOD*, by the Agency of his mighty Power, and blessed *SPIRIT*. *He* shews Us the all-sufficient Fulness of *CHRIST*. *He* brings Us with ardent Longings to *CHRIST*.
He

* 1 Cor. i. 30.

† † *Righteousness* and *Sanctification*; the former imputed, the latter inherent. This preserves a *Distinction* between the noble Articles, and assigns to each a grand Share in the Oeconomy of Salvation.—To say, that if one of the Blessings is communicated by way of Imputation, the other should be communicated in the same Manner, seems to be *cavilling*, rather than *arguing*. Because, the Subjects are of a different Nature; and therefore must be dispensed in a different Way.—The *Cocoa Tree* is, to the *American*, Food and Clothing, a Habitation and domestic Utensils. But must We suppose it, administering to *all* these Uses, in *one* and the *same* unvaried Method? Because, in one Respect it is eaten, in another it is wore, must it be thus applied in all? I am apt to think, the illiterate Savage, who enjoys the several Gifts, need not be taught the Absurdity of such a Supposition.

He implants Us into CHRIST, and makes Us Partakers of his Merits.

In the Process of the same Epistle, the sacred Penman enumerates the *constituent Parts* of that great Salvation, which the SON of GOD has procured for ruined Sinners. *But Ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD* *. Ye are washed; washed in redeeming Blood, and cleansed from all the Filthiness of your Iniquities. Ye are *sanctified*; renewed in the Propensity of your Mind, and fitted for a Life of universal Holiness. Ye are *justified*; wholly delivered from Wrath, and restored to a State of complete Acceptance with the KING of Heaven. All these Gifts and Prerogatives, are conferred upon the unworthy Sinner, *in the Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST*; in Consideration of his atoning Death and meritorious Righteousness. *By the SPIRIT of our GOD*; through the Efficacy of his Operation, revealing *CHRIST*, and working Faith in the Heart.

Read *Rom. x. 4.* Some Gentlemen have talked of a *new remedial Law*. Whereas, the Apostle speaks of the old, the unalterable, the *Mosaic* † Law.—What is the End of this sacred inviolable Rule? Is fallen Man, or the GOD-Man? If the former, then the Law must be an abortive Scheme, and never obtain its proper Accomplishment. If the latter, then it receives all due Obedience, and is satisfied to the very uttermost. Therefore, *CHRIST is the End of the Law*.—And wherefore? *For Righteousness*; not that the Law should

* 1 Cor. vi. 11.

† See Rom. x. 5.

should be set aside, but that a justifying Righteousness might be wrought out. How is this to be done? Not merely by suffering its Penalty, but also by fulfilling its Commands. According to that Saying, *Who so doeth them shall live*, shall be entitled to eternal Life, *by them*.—Is this Obedience to be performed by Us, or by our SURETY? By our SURETY, no doubt. Since the Apostle is arguing in professed Opposition to all Deeds of our own; and tells Us, that the justifying Righteousness is to be had, not by our Obeying, but by our Believing; it is *to every One that believeth*.

Follow the Course of a River; it will constantly lead You to the Ocean. Trace the Veins of the Body; they invariably unite in the Heart. Mark likewise the Tendency of the Law; it no less constantly and invariably conducts You to *CHRIST*, as the Center of its Views, and the Consummation of its Demands.—The *moral* Law aims, at discovering our Guilt, and demonstrating our inexpressible Need of a SAVIOUR. The *ceremonial* points Him out, as suffering in our Stead; making Reconciliation for Iniquity; and purging away every Defilement with his Blood.—They *both* direct the wretched Transgressor, to renounce Himself, and fly to the REDEEMER. Who alone has paid that perfect Obedience, and brought in that everlasting Righteousness, which the Sinner wants, and the Law exacts. Who is, therefore, the only proper *Accomplishment* of the one, and the only suitable *Supply* for the other.

What is the grand Design of the whole Scriptures? St. Paul, asserting their divine Origin, and displaying the gracious Purposes, which they are intended

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intended to serve, writes thus: *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of GOD; and is profitable—for Doctrine, to declare and establish religious Truth—for Reproof, to convince of Sin, and to refute Error—for Correction* *, or Renovation of the Heart, and Reformation of the Life—for *Instruction in Righteousness*, in that Righteousness, which could never have been learned from any other Book, and in which alone sinful Men may appear with Comfort before their GOD †.

We

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. Προς επανορθωσιν.

† “ Was there ever such a Comment before?” says *Vadius*. “ The plain Meaning is, For training up in “ Holiness of Heart and Life.” *Vadius* forgets, that this Meaning was included in the Word επανορθωσις. Which signifies *Restitutio in integrum*. A Restoration to Integrity of Heart, of Life, of Character.—Besides; if this was the Meaning, I ask; Where is the distinguishing Characteristic of the Gospel? We have not so much as a Hint at its grand Peculiarity, *The Righteousness of GOD*, Rom. i. 17. Would the Apostle, in describing very explicitly the Purport and Design of the Scripture, omit that which is the very Life and Soul of the Whole?

“ Was there ever such a Comment before?”—Yes; the Psalmist, long ago, gave Us such a Comment. Speaking on the same Subject, and addressing Himself to the victorious RREDEEMER He says; *Ride on, because of the Word* (על דבר) *of Truth, of Meekness, and Righteousness*. Here He opens and particularises the Nature, End, and Effects of the divine Word. It is the Source of all that *Truth*, which cometh from above, and maketh wise unto Salvation. It is the Seed of all that reverential Regard to GOD, and benevolent Concern for Man, which may be expressed by one principal Branch of each, *Meekness*. It is a Discovery of that *Righteousness*, by which alone the Ungodly are justified; on which alone Men may depend for Salvation; and which could never have been the Object of their Faith, or even of their Knowledge, if it had not been revealed.

St.

We have seen the principal Scope of the Law; and the leading Design of the Scriptures: let Us add one Enquiry more. What is the chief Office of the SPIRIT?—If all these coincide, and uniformly terminate in the imputed Righteousness of CHRIST; We have a Confirmation of its Reality and Excellence, great as Man can desire; I had almost said, great as GOD can impart. — What says our LORD upon this Point? *When He, the SPIRIT of Truth is come, He shall convince * the World* of

St. Paul himself, either gives Us the same Comment, or else directs Us to make it, when He styles the Christian Doctrine, *λογος δικαιοσυνης*, Heb. v. 13. Which is so called, says a masterly Critic, *Quia nos instruit de verâ Justitiâ, quæ coram DEO valet, & quæ coram DEO consistimus*. Because it instructs Us in that Righteousness, which avails for our Justification before GOD; and by Virtue of which, We stand unblameable in his Sight.—According to this Interpretation, the Apostle considers the Revelation, the Display, the Grant of the justifying Righteousness, as the very Quintessence of Scripture; that which creates its chief Distinction; and even constitutes its Denomination. Who then can assent to *Vadius*, when He would have the very Quintessence of Scripture, excluded from the Analysis of its Contents.

For my Part, I should see but little Excellency in those sacred Volumes, if the Blood and Righteousness of CHRIST, did not make the most conspicuous Figure in their several Pages. I should fetch a Sigh, and say; “Alas! here is nothing, that may recommend me to “GOD. Nothing that can give me Acceptance in his “Sight. Here is the Pole indeed, but the brazen Serpent is gone.” For which Reason, I cannot persuade myself, to part with or resign in my Comment, what would be an unspeakable Loss to me, if exterminated in Fact.

* *He shall convince*, seems to be the most eligible Translation of *μελεγειν*. To reprove of Righteousness, sounds harsh. To convince of Righteousness, is proper. Besides; this

of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. Of Sin, because they believe not in me : of Righteousness, because I go to my FATHER, and ye see me no more : of Judgment, because the Prince of this World is judged.*

—Is it possible for Words to be more *weighty* and *comprehensive*? Here is a Summary of Christian Faith, and of Christian Holiness. Not that *superficial* Holiness, which is patched up of devotional Forms, and goes no farther than external Performances : but that which is *vital*, and springs from the Heart ; consists in Power, not in mere Profession ; whose Praise, if not of Men, who are smitten with pompous Outfides, is sure to be of GOD, who distinguishes the Things which are excellent.

He shall convince the World of Sin ; of original and actual Sin. The Sin of their Nature, as well as the Sin of their Life ; the Sin of their best Deeds, no less than of their criminal Commissions, and blameable Omissions. Above all, of their sinning against the sovereign, the only Remedy, by Unbelief ; *because they believe not on me.*—He shall convince of *Righteousness* ; of the exalted REDEEMER's Righteousness, which the foregoing Conviction must render peculiarly welcome. Convince them, that it was wrought out in Behalf of disobedient and defective Mortals ; that it is absolutely perfect, and sufficient to justify even the most Ungodly. Of all which an incontestable Proof is given, by his Resurrection from the Dead, his triumphant Ascension
into

Word implies the *sure Success*, which attends the Operation of the Divine SPIRIT.—Man may *reprove*, and no Conviction ensue. Whereas, that Almighty AGENT not only reproves, but reproves *with Power* ; so as to determine the Judgment, and sway the Affections.

* John xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11.

into Heaven, and Session at the Right-hand of his FATHER; *because I go to my FATHER, and ye see me no more* *.—He shall convince of Judgment. Those, who are humbled under a Sense of Guilt, and justified through an imputed Righteousness, shall be taught by happy Experience, that *the Prince of this World is condemned* and dethroned in their Hearts: That their Souls, by Virtue of this victorious Faith, are rescued from the Tyranny of Satan; are delivered from the Bondage of their Corruptions; and restored to the Liberty—the glorious Liberty of the Children of GOD.

You wonder, perhaps, that I have not strengthened my Cause, by any Quotation from the Epistle to the Galatians. What I design, my dear Theron, is not to accumulate, but to select Arguments. However, that I may not disappoint an Expectation so reasonable, I proceed to lay before You a very nervous Passage, from that masterly Piece of sacred Controversy.—Only, let me just observe, that the Epistle was written to Persons, who had embraced Christianity, and professed an Affiance in CHRIST. But would fain have *joined* Circumcision, would fain have *superadded* their own religious Duties, to the Merits of their SAVIOUR; in order to constitute, at least, *some* Part of their justifying Righteousness. Against which Error, the vigilant and indefatigable

* If the Work had been imperfect in any Degree, our REDEEMER, instead of taking up his stated and final Residence in the Regions of Glory, must have descended again into this inferior World, to complete what was deficient. Therefore, his *Sitting at the Right-hand of GOD*, is a most comfortable Evidence, that He has thoroughly performed his Commission; has fully satisfied for Sin; and brought in the all-meritorious Righteousness.

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indefatigable Assertor of the Truth as it is in JESUS, remonstrates—*We who are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of JESUS CHRIST, even We have believed in JESUS CHRIST; that We might be justified by the Faith of CHRIST, and not by the Works of the Law; for, by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified* *.

We, who are Jews by Nature; are the Descendants of Abraham, and GOD's peculiar People; have the Tables of his Law, and the Ordinances of his Worship: We who, in Point of Privileges, are greatly superior to the Gentile Nations, and have all possible Advantages for establishing (if such a Thing were practicable) a Righteousness of our own; What have We done?—We have believed in JESUS CHRIST: We have renounced Ourselves; disclaimed whatever is our own; and depended wholly on the Blood and Obedience of the glorious IMMANUEL.—For what End? That by this Faith in CHRIST, which receives his Righteousness; pleads his Righteousness; and presents nothing but his infinitely noble Righteousness before the Throne, We might be justified.—What Motive has induced Us to this Practice?—A firm

VOL. II.

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* Gal. ii. 15, 16. Observable, very observable is the Zeal of our Apostle, in this determined Stand, against the most specious, and therefore the most dangerous Encroachments of Error. To express his ardent Concern for the Truth and Purity of the Gospel—The Works of the Law are mentioned no less than three Times, and as often excluded from the Affair of Justification—The Faith of CHRIST likewise is thrice inculcated, and as often asserted to be the only Method of becoming righteous before GOD.

Perfuation, that by *the Works of the Law*, by sincere Obedience, or personal Holiness, *no Man living* has been, and no Man living *can be, justified before GOD.*

Are You tired, *Theron*? Have I fatigued your Attention, instead of convincing your Judgment?—I will not harbour such a Suspicion. It is pleasing to converse with Those, who have traveled into *foreign* Countries, and seen the *Wonders* of Creation. We hearken to their Narratives with Delight. Every new Adventure whets our Curiosity, rather than palls our Appetite. Must it not then afford a more sublime Satisfaction, to be entertained with the Discourses of a Person, who had, not indeed sailed round the World, but made a Journey to the *third Heavens*? Who had been admitted into the *Paradise* of GOD, and heard Things of infinite Importance, and unutterable Dignity?—This was the Privilege of that incomparable Man, whose Observations and Discoveries, I have been presenting to my Friend. And I promise myself, He will not complain of Weariness, if I enrich my Epistle with one or two more of those glorious Truths.

GOD hath made HIM to be Sin for Us who knew no Sin; that We might, not be put into a Capacity of acquiring a Righteousness of our own, but be made the Righteousness of GOD in Him *. In this Text, the *double* Imputation of our Sin to *CHRIST*, and of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness to Us, is most emphatically taught, and most charmingly contrasted.—Most *emphatically* taught. For, We are said, not barely to be made righteous, but to be made Righteousness

* 2 Cor. v. 21.

teousness itself; and not Righteousness only, but (which is the utmost that Language can reach) the Righteousness of GOD.—Most *charmingly contrasted*. For, One cannot but ask, In what Manner, *CHRIST* was made Sin? In the very same Manner, We are made Righteousness. *CHRIST* knew no *actual* Sin. Yet, upon his mediatorial Interposition on our Behalf, He was treated by Divine Justice, as a sinful Person. We likewise are destitute of all *legal* Righteousness. Yet, upon our receiving *CHRIST*, and believing in his Name, We are regarded by the Divine MAJESTY, as righteous Creatures. This therefore cannot, in either Case, be *intrinsically*; but must be, in both Instances, *imputatively*.—Gracious, divinely gracious Exchange *! pregnant with inestimable Benefits. The incessant Triumph of the *strong*, the sovereign Consolation of the *weak* Believer!

Cease your Exultation, cries One, and come down from your Altitudes. The Term used in this Verse denotes, not so properly *Sin*, as an *Offering for Sin*.—This is a mere Supposal, which I may as reasonably deny, as Another affirm. Since the Word occurs, much *more frequently* in the former Signification, than in the latter; and since, by giving it the latter Signification in the Passage before Us, We very much impair, if not totally destroy, the Apostle's beautiful *Antithesis*.

E e 2

How-

* *Ita scilicet mirabili Permutatione Mala nostra in se recepit, ut Bona sua nobis largiretur; recepit Miseriam, ut largiretur Misericordiam; recepit Maledictionem, ut Benedictionis suæ compotes nos faceret; recepit Mortem, ut Vitam conferret; recepit Peccatum, ut Justitiam impertiretur.* Thus writes the judicious *Turretin*. To which, in Concurrency with the accurate *Witsius*, I subscribe both with Hand and Heart.

However; not to contend, but to allow the Remark. I borrow my Reply from a brave old *Champion* * for the Truths of the Gospel: “ This Text, “ says He, invincibly proveth, That We are not “ justified in GOD’s Sight by Righteousness inherent in Us, but by the Righteousness of “ *CHRIST* imputed to Us through Faith.” After which He adds, what I make my Answer to the Objection; “ That *CHRIST* was made Sin “ for Us, because He was a Sacrifice for Sin, We “ confess: but *therefore* was He a Sacrifice for Sin, “ because our Sin was imputed to Him, and punished in Him.”—The poor Delinquents under the *Mosaic* Dispensation, who brought their Sin-offering to the Altar of the LORD, were directed to lay their Hand on the Head of the devoted Beast. Signifying, by this Usage, a Transferring of Sin from the Offerer to the Sacrifice. Conformably to the Import of this Ceremony, *CHRIST* assumed our Demerit. Like a true *piacular* Victim, He suffered the Punishment, which We had deserved; and which, without such a Commutation, We must have undergone. So that our LORD’s being made a Sin-offering for Us, does by no means invalidate, but very much confirm our Doctrine.

It

* See Dr. *Fulk*’s Annotation on the Place, in that valuable Piece of antient Controversy and Criticism, *The Examination of the Rhemish Testament*. Which, though not altogether so elegant and refined in the Language, nor so delicate and genteel in the Manner, as might be wished; is nevertheless full of *sound* Divinity, *weighty* Arguments, and *important* Observations.—Would the young Student be taught to discover the *very Sinews* of Popery, and be enabled to give an effectual Blow to that Complication of Errors, I scarce know a Treatise better calculated for the Purpose.

It necessarily implies the Translation of our Iniquity to his Person; and on the Principles of Analogy, must infer the Imputation of *his Righteousness* to our Souls.

One Passage more permit me to transcribe into my Paper; and, at the same Time, to wish, that it may be written on both our Hearts. Written, not with Ink and Pen; no, nor with the Point of a Diamond; but with the Finger of the living GOD. *Yea, doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD; for whom I have suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in Him; not having mine own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of CHRIST, the Righteousness which is of GOD through Faith*.*

This is a Passage of special Eminence, as well as of singular Importance. For which Reason, You will allow me to be somewhat circumstantial, in examining its Meaning, Force, and Evidence.—The Apostle is Here relating his own Experience, and exhibiting Himself as a *Pattern* for Christians. He shews, what was the present Frame, and what the prevailing Exercise of his Spirit, with regard to the momentous Affair of Justification before GOD.

Justification! Says a certain Author; no, “by referring the Text to Justification only, You miserably pervert the whole Scope of the Words. It manifestly relates to *Sanctification* † chiefly, if not to that only.”

Then

* Phil. iii. 8, 9.

† As to the Doctrine of *Sanctification*, the Apostle,

Then We are directed to find our *Rejoicing*; and to fix our *Confidence* for eternal Life (of these Things the Apostle is manifestly speaking) in Sanctification chiefly, if not in that only; not in what *CHRIST* has done and suffered, but in that which We Ourselves do and possess. The Papists will thank Us for such a Concession. It makes Room for their Notion of Merit. But can never exalt Grace, or exclude Boasting.

According to his Interpretation, We should all be desirous to appear, at the great and terrible Day, in the Garments of Sanctification chiefly, if not in those only. But are these without Spot and Blemish? Will these present Us *faultless* before the Throne of GOD's Glory? Hide me, ye Rocks! Cover me, ye Mountains! Much rather than expose me, in such an Array, before the Eye of infinite Purity.

Nay; if this be the Mind of the Apostle, then We must count all other Things, even the Blood and Righteousness of our incarnate GOD, to be undesirable as Loss, and despicable as Dung. Dreadful Consequence! Not to be mentioned without shuddering! Yet into such Consequences We are inevitably led, by this too peremptory and unadvised Exposition of the Text.

But We have not so learned *CHRIST*. We think, the Apostle expresses a vehement Desire, and manifests

like a judicious and faithful Dispenser of the Mysteries of *CHRIST*, neither neglects it, nor confounds it with the other grand Subject of Religion. He treats of it in the next Verses, (10, 11, 12, &c.) and considers it as a Blessing, following after and flowing from, this capital, leading, all-enlivening Privilege—*Justification* through the Righteousness of JEHOVAH.

manifests a most attentive Care, that He may remain established on the true justifying Righteousness. A Point, He well knew, of inexpressible Moment. In which Mankind are unaccountably prone to mistake. Nay, *Paul* himself had stumbled at this Stumbling-stone; imagining that Righteousness to be unto Life, which was productive of nothing but Condemnation and Death. He therefore speaks with Earnestness; He acts with Circumspection; as a Person who had been once caught in the Snare, but is resolved not to be entangled again.

Perhaps, You will say; I do not wonder to hear Him repudiate his old, *pharisaical*, spurious Righteousness. But does He give the Bill of Divorce to his new, his *Christian*, his real Righteousness? That which proceeded from Grace shed abroad in his Heart; and produced those heavenly Tempers and holy Works, which were both pleasing to GOD, and honourable to Religion?

I answer; He had *no other* Righteousness to renounce for the Sake of *CHRIST*; since, as You justly observe, his former Pharisaical Strictness was spurious, not real Godliness. This He had long ago learned to call by another Name; looking upon it, as so much specious Sinfulness, or as a splendid Abomination. By *his own Righteousness*, therefore, He must mean, whatever He possessed or performed, in Conformity to the Law as a Rule of Life, and through the Influence of Grace as a Principle of Life. Against all this, whether it consisted of good Deeds or devout Qualities, He enters his Protestation. Enters it, in those strong Words, *not having mine own Righteousness*. Not having it

even once in my Thoughts; not casting so much as a single Glance towards it; but being just as if I had never yielded any Obedience at all.

And great Reason there was, for using all this Jealousy. Since nothing is more natural to Us, in all Estates, than *Self-confidence*. While We are destitute of Grace, We are almost sure to trust in outward Duties, and what is called a moral Righteousness. When We are renewed by Grace, alas! how prone are We to doat upon the Beauties of our Sanctification; and not look with the *Oculo irretorto*, singly and solely to *CHRIST*, as our justifying Righteousness!

In determined Opposition to such very pernicious Errors, the Apostle speaks to this Effect—"The
 " Privilege of being a *Hebrew* by Birth; the Pre-
 " rogative of being a *Pharisee* by Profession; to-
 " gether with a Behaviour exemplary, and a Re-
 " putation unblameable in the Sight of Men; all
 " these, which were once my Plea for Heaven, and
 " therefore reckoned my highest Gain; as soon as
 " I became acquainted with the glorious Perfections
 " of *CHRIST*, I counted * *Loss* for Him.—And
 " now, though I have been a *Disciple* many Years;
 " have walked in all holy Conversation and God-
 " liness; have endured, for my Divine MAS-
 " TER's Name, Tribulations above measure;
 " have laboured more abundantly and more suc-
 " cessfully than all the Apostles; yet, even *these*
 " and *all other* Attainments, of what Kind or of
 " what Date soever, I count † but Loss, for the

" transcen-

* *Ἡσπαρι*, I counted; this is spoken of the Time past.

† *Ἡσπαρι*, relates to the present Time, and comprehends present Attainments, I do count.—Not some, or the greatest Part,

5

“ transcendent Excellency of *CHRIST JESUS*
 “ my *LORD*.—*Yea doubtless* *; it is my delibe-
 “ rate and stedfast Resolution; what I have most
 “ seriously adopted, and do publicly avow; that,
 “ specious as all human Righteousness may seem,
 “ and valuable as it may be in other Respects; I
 “ both do, and ever shall, treat it with Disdain;
 “ yea, trample it under my Feet, that I may *win*
 “ *CHRIST* †, and triumph in the exalted *JESUS*. Human Righteousness fades into No-
 “ thing; it dwindles into *less than nothing*; if set
 in

Part, but *all Things*.—What? Is a Course of Sobriety, and the Exercise of Morality, to be reckoned as *Dung*? *All Things*, says the Apostle—What? Is our most elevated Devotion, and enlarged Obedience, to be degraded at this monstrous Rate? *All Things*, says the Apostle.—This is his invariable Reply. Upon all Things whatever, besides *CHRIST* and his ineffable Righteousness, He holds the Door, when the great Cause of Justification is under Debate. And We may venture to affirm, That *He had the Mind of CHRIST*.

* Perhaps *ἀλλὰ μὲνουνε* may be translated, *but truly*. As if He had said, “ But why should I mention any more
 “ Particulars? *In Truth*, I count *all Things*, &c.”

† *Δια Χριστον—δια το υπερεχον—να Χριστον κερδησω*—plainly imply this *comparative* or *relative* Sense. Virtues, which are the Fruits of the *SPIRIT*, and Labours, which are a Blessing to Mankind, no sober Person will reckon *absolutely* or in *all Respects* despicable; but only in a limited and qualified Acceptation. Despicable, not in themselves, but as compared with the divinely perfect Righteousness of *CHRIST*, or as referred to the infinitely important Article of Justification.

That *Aspasio* speaks the Sense of our Church, will appear from this short but very pertinent Extract:—“ The
 “ Apostle *St. Paul* saith, He doth glory, in what? In
 “ the Contempt of his own Righteousness; and that He
 “ looketh for the Righteousness of *GOD* by Faith.”

Homily of Salvation, Part II.

“ in Competition with his matchless Obedience.
 “ And should it supersede my Application to his
 “ Merits, or weaken my Reliance on his Media-
 “ tion, it would *then* be, not contemptible only,
 “ but injurious—to be avoided, with Sollicitude,
 “ as the greatest *Loss*; to be rejected, with Ab-
 “ horrence, as the vilest *Dung* *.”

You will ask, If He rejects all his own Righteousness, on *what* are his Hopes fixed?—On a Foundation, *extensive* as the Obedience of the REDEEMER's Life and Death, *unshaken* as the Dignity of his eternal Power and GODHEAD. They are fixed on *the Righteousness which is of GOD*; the Righteousness which GOD the FATHER, in unsearchable Wisdom, provided; and which GOD the SON, in unutterable Goodness, wrought.—Do You enquire, *How* He came to be invested with this Righteousness? The Answer is ready and satisfactory. It was by the Application of the Divine SPIRIT, and the Instrumentality of *Faith*.—Lest Any should imagine, That this Faith might be substituted, instead of his own Obedience to the Law; He puts an apparent Difference
 between

* Ζημια, Κυβαρα. How emphatical are the Words! How bold are the Images! And may We not observe a fine Advance in the Sense? *Loss*, which is detrimental to our Interests, and not sustained without Regret. *Dung*, which is loathsome to our Senses, and cast away with Abhorrence.

Has the *Apostle* pronounced all this concerning human Righteousness, when it would presume to be a Rival or a Partner with *CHRIST*? Then None can justly censure what *Aspasio* has said upon the same Subject. Since his Sentiments, compared with the inspired Writer's, are but as the faint Breath of an *English* Orchard, compared with the potent Fragrance of an Orangery in *Seville*.

between the Righteousness which justifies, and the Faith by which it is received: not the Righteousness which *consists in*, but is *THROUGH the Faith of CHRIST*.—To shew the great Importance of this Distinction; how earnestly He insisted upon it, as a Preacher; how much it tended to his Consolation, as a *Christian*; He repeats the Sentiment, He reinculcates the Doctrine, *The Righteousness which is of GOD BY Faith*.

Will *You* now, *Theron*, or shall *I*, poor unprofitable Creatures, presume to rely on any Performances or any Accomplishments of our own? When that distinguished Saint—a perfect Prodigy of Gifts, of Graces, and of Zeal—indefatigable in Labours, unconquerable by Afflictions, and of whose Usefulness there is neither Measure nor End—When *He* denies Himself in every View; depreciates all; disavows all *; and makes mention of nothing, but the incomparable Righteousness of his *obedient, dying, interceding SAVIOUR*.

What shall I say more? Shall I attempt to play the Rhetorician, and borrow the insinuating Arts of Persuasion? This, after all the *cogent Testimonies* produced, and all the *great Authorities* urged, would be a needless Parade. When our Pen is a Sunbeam, there is but little Occasion to dip it in Oil.

Instead of such an Attempt, give me leave to make a frank and honest Confession. I would conceal nothing from my Friend. He should have a Sash to my Breast; throw it up at his Pleasure; and see all
that

* Thus argues St. *Chrysostom*, commenting on the Passage; Εἰ ὁ δικαιοσύνην ἔχων, διὰ τὸ μὴδὲν εἶναι, πρὸς ταύτην τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἐδράμεν, οἱ μὴ ἔχοντες πῶς ἢ πολλῶν μᾶλλον ὀφείλουσι προσερχεῖν αὐτῇ.

that passes within.—Though I never had any Temptation to that pernicious Set of Errors, which passes under the Character of *Socinianism*; yet I had many Searchings of Heart, and much solicitous Enquiry, How far We are indebted to *CHRIST's* active Righteousness. Thoroughly persuaded, that *Other Foundation can no Man lay, save that which is laid, even JESUS CHRIST**; and that *there is no other Name given under Heaven, whereby Men can be saved †*; yet, whether We were not to confine our believing Regards to a dying SAVIOUR, was Matter of considerable Doubt.—At first, I was inclined to acquiesce in the Affirmative. After long Consideration and many Prayers, my Faith fixed upon the *Whole* of *CHRIST's* mediatorial Undertaking. Which began in his spontaneous Submission to the Law; was carried on through all his meritorious Life; and issued in his atoning Death.—This is now the Basis of my Confidence, and the Bulwark of my Happiness. Hither I fly; here I rest; as the Dove, after her wearisome and fruitless Rovings, returned to *Noah*, and rested in the Ark.

This Scheme first recommended itself to my *Affections*; as making the most ample Provision, for the Security and Repose of a guilty Conscience. Which, when alarmed by the Accusations of Sin, is very apprehensive of its Condition; and will not be comforted, till every Scruple is satisfied, and all the Obstructions to its Peace are removed. Thus I reasoned with myself — “ Though there is, undoubtedly, “ something to be said for the other Side of the Question; yet, this is evidently the safest Method. “ And, in an Affair of infinite Consequence, who “ would

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

† Acts iv. 12.

“ would not prefer the safest and surest Expedient?
 “ —Should the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*
 “ be *indispensably* requisite, as a Wedding-garment;
 “ what will *they* do, when the great immortal
 “ KING appears, who have refused to accept it?
 “ Whereas, should it not prove *so absolutely* neces-
 “ sary, yet such a Dependence can never obstruct
 “ our Salvation. It can never be charged upon Us,
 “ as an Article of Contumacy or Perverseness, that
 “ We thought *too meanly* of our own, *too magnifi-*
 “ *cently* of our LORD’s Obedience. So that let
 “ the Die turn either Way, We are exposed to no
 “ Hazard. —This Scheme takes in all, that the
 “ other Systems comprehend, and abundantly more.
 “ In this I find no Defect, no Flaw, no Shadow of
 “ Insufficiency. It is somewhat like the *perfect Cube*;
 “ which, where-ever it may be thrown, or however
 “ it may fall, is sure to settle upon its Base.—Sup-
 “ posing, therefore, the important Beam should
 “ hang in Equilibrio, with respect to Argument;
 “ these Circumstances, cast into the Scale, may
 “ very justly be allowed to turn the Balance.”

Upon a more attentive Examination of the Sub-
 ject, I perceived—That this is the Doctrine of our
national Church; has received the Attestation of our
 ablest Divines; and has been, in all Ages, the Con-
 solation of the most eminent Saints:—That it is the
 genuine Sense of Scripture; and not some inferior
 or subordinate Point, incidentally touched upon by
 the inspired Writers, but the *Sum and Substance* *
of

* This Doctrine runs through St. *Paul’s* Writings, like
 a golden *Warp*. While Privileges, Blessings, and evan-
 gelical Duties, are like a *Woof*; a Woof (if I may allude
 to the Ornaments of the Sanctuary) of Blue, of Purple,
of

of their heavenly Message; that which constitutes the Vitals of their System, and is the very Soul of their Religion. On which Account the whole Gospel is denominated from it, and styled *The Ministration of Righteousness*:—I was farther convinced, That this Way of Salvation magnifies, beyond Compare, the divine Law; is no less honourable to all the divine Attributes; and exhibits the ever Blessed MEDIATOR in the most illustrious and the most delightful View.

All these Considerations, under the Influence of the eternal SPIRIT, have determined my *Judgment*, and established my *Faith*. So that I trust, neither the Subtilties of Wit, nor the Sneers of Ridicule, nor any other Artifice, shall ever be able to separate me from the Grace and Righteousness which are in JESUS CHRIST.—By his Death, I am discharged from Guilt—by his Obedience, I am constituted righteous—by his complete Satisfaction, I am completely justified, and shall be eternally saved.—In each of these Respects, HE is my ALL.

Let me, by Way of Conclusion, review that awful Subject, which introduced the Letter. Let me suppose the JUDGE, who is at the Door, actually come: the great and terrible Day, which is

of Scarlet, and indeed of every pleasant Colour. *The Righteousness of GOD*, Rom. i. 17. 2 Cor. v. 21.—*The Righteousness from GOD*, Phil. iii. 10.—*Righteousness by Faith*, Rom. iii. 22.—*Righteousness of Faith*, Rom. iv. 11. x. 6.—*Righteousness without the Law*, Rom. iii. 21.—*Righteousness without Works*, Rom. iv. 6.—*Righteousness in the Blood of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 9.—*Righteousness by the Obedience of CHRIST*, Rom. v. 19.—*Righteousness not our own*, Phil. iii. 9.—*Righteousness imputed by GOD*, Rom. iv. 6, 10, 22.

is hasting forward *, really commenced.—Hark ! The Trumpet sounds the universal Summons. The Living are struck with a death-like Astonishment ; the Dead start from their silent Abodes.—See ! The whole Earth takes Fire ; the Sun is turned into Darkness ; and the Stars fall from the Firmament.—Behold ! The ANCIENT OF DAYS is revealed from Heaven. *His Garment is white as Snow, and the Hair of his Head like the pure Wool. His Throne is like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels are as burning Fire. Thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand Times ten thousand stand before Him. The Judgment is set, and the Books are opened †.*

Observe those exemplary *Christians*, whose Sentiments I have been collecting. They renounce themselves, and rely on their Glorious SURETY. Methinks, I hear them say, Each as they quit their Beds of Dust ; *I will go forth from the Grave in thy Strength, O Blessed JESUS ; and, at the decisive Tribunal,*

* The sacred Writers, I observe, often remind their Readers of this grand Event ; often display this *delightful, dreadful* Scene.—Their Manner of Speaking shews, that they themselves lived under the habitual and joyful Expectation of it : as Persons, who were *looking for, and hasting to, the Coming of the Day of GOD*.—They represent it, not only as *sure*, but *near* ; yea, very near, and upon the Point to take place. *The LORD is at Hand. The JUDGE is at the Door. Yet a little while, and HE that shall come, will come and will not tarry*.—The last Passage is the most spirited and emphatical of them all ; but has lost much of its Emphasis, by the *English* Version. It is in the Original *μικρον οσον οσον*. A beautiful *Pleonasm* ; by which the *Septuagint*, though too often inaccurate in translating the *prophetic* Text, have very happily expressed *Isaiah's* כמעט רגע Which may, I think, be rendered in our Language, *yet a very, very little while*. Heb. x. 37. Isai. xxvi. 20.

† Dan. vii. 9, 10.

Tribunal, will make mention of thy Righteousness only.

—At the same Time; will You, *Theron*, or shall I

—before the innumerable Multitude of anxious Sinners, and adoring Seraphs—stand forth and declare?—“ Let those pusillanimous Creatures fly for

“ Refuge to their SAVIOUR’s Righteousness.

“ We will confide in Works, in Accomplishments

“ of our own. We are the Men, who have *per-*

“ *sonally* kept the divine Law, and want no *sup-*

“ *posititious* Obedience from Another. Let the

“ Eye that glances through Immensity, and pene-

“ trates the Recesses of the Heart; let that holy

“ and omniscient Eye, examine our Temper, and

“ sift our Conduct. We are bold to risk our Souls,

“ and all their immortal Interests, on the Issue of

“ such a Scrutiny.”

Perhaps, Your Mind is impressed with this *solemn Scene*, and your Thoughts recoil at such *daring Presumption*. If so, it will be proper for me to withdraw, and leave You to your own Meditations. At such Moments, to obtrude on Your Company, would render me the troublesome and officious, rather than

Your respectful and affectionate,

ASPASIO.

The END of the SECOND VOLUME.